

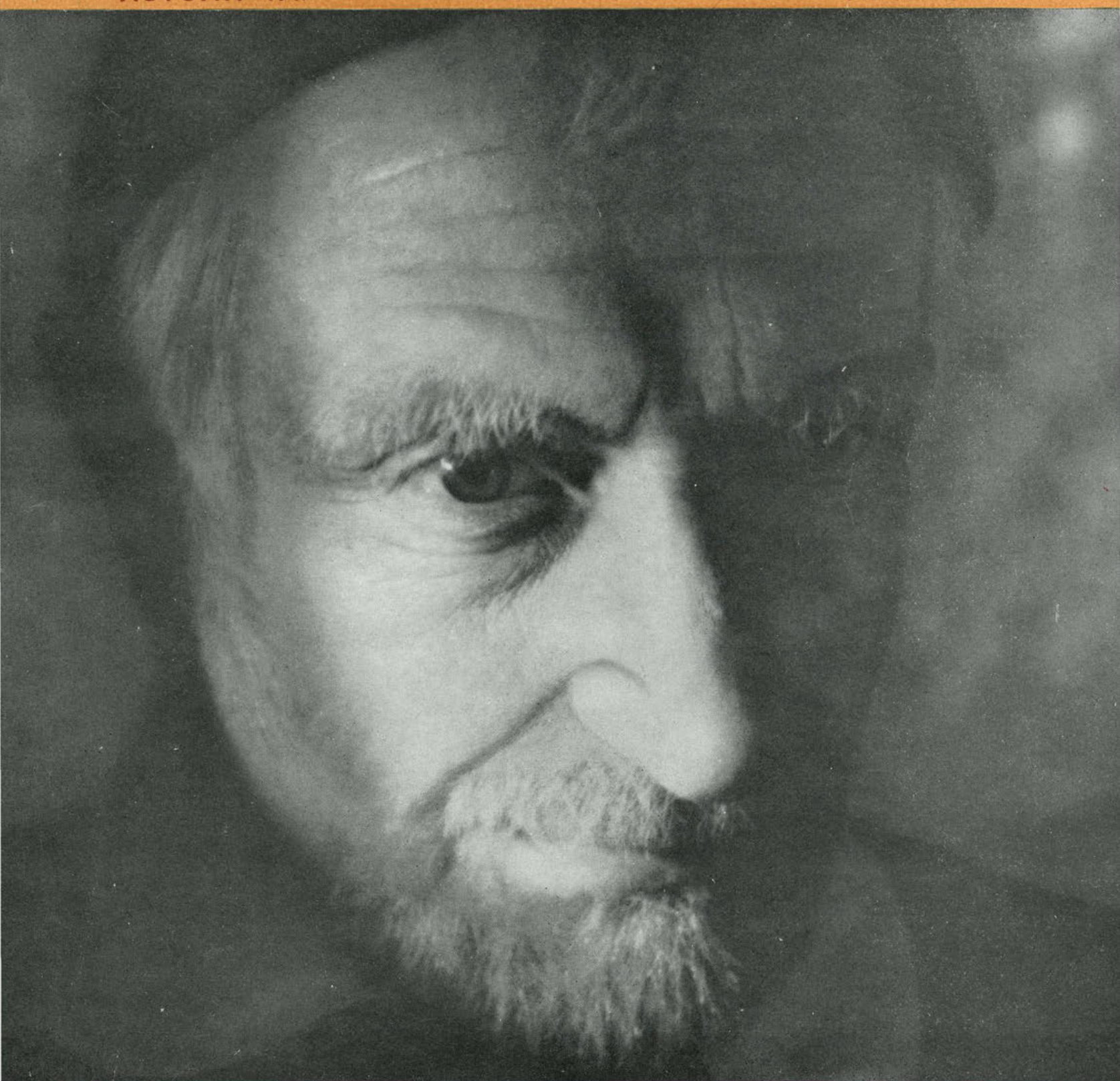
SIGHT AND SOUND

PUBLISHED BY THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

AUTUMN 1947

VOL. 16 NO. 63

PRICE 2s. 6d.



EISENSTEIN

• OSWELL BLAKESTON

• JAY LEYDA

• ROGER MANVELL

DOCUMENTARY NEWS LETTER

PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY

DOCUMENTARY NEWS LETTER stands for the use of film as a medium of propaganda and instruction in the interests of the people of Great Britain and the Empire and in the interests of common people all over the world.

DOCUMENTARY NEWS LETTER is produced under the auspices of
Film Centre, London.

Subscription : Six shillings per annum (post free), Single copies 1/- each from

DOCUMENTARY NEWS LETTER - 34 Soho Square, W.1 - Gerrard 4253

Owned and Published by Film Centre Ltd.

Editorial Board

STEPHEN ACKROYD - DONALD ALEXANDER - MAX ANDERSON
EDGAR ANSTEY GEOFFREY BELL - PAUL FLETCHER - SINCLAIR ROAD
JOHN TAYLOR - GRAHAME THARP - BASIL WRIGHT

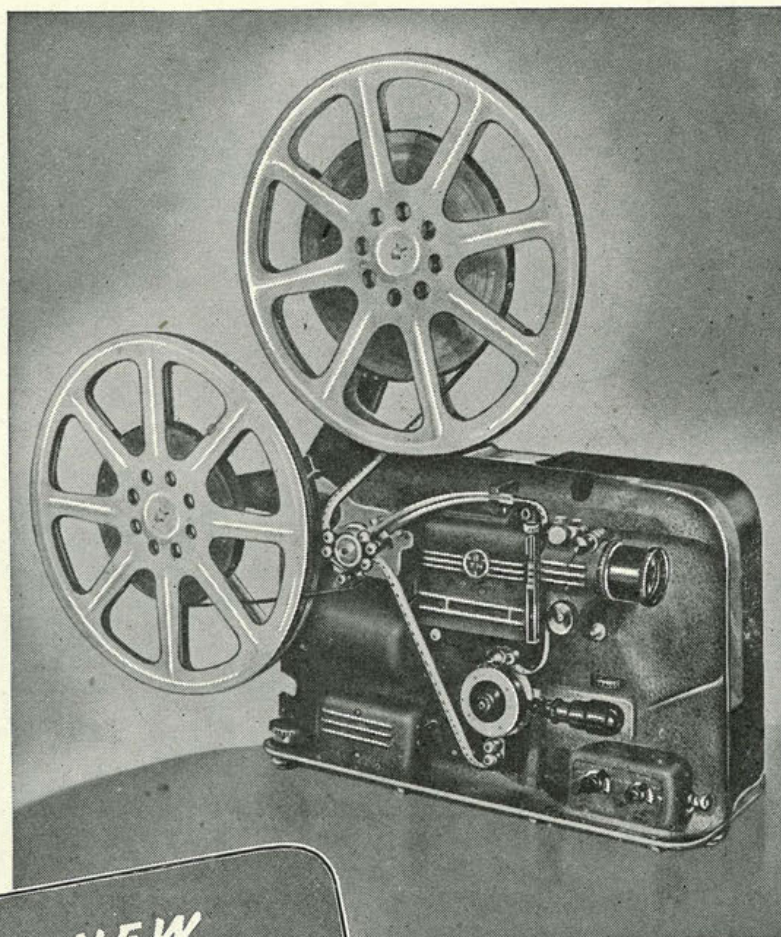
FIFTY NATIONS

are represented among the members of the British Film Institute who share a belief in the future of the film. For full information, please write to:

4 GREAT RUSSELL STREET
LONDON, W.C.1

The British Film Institute

—an independent organisation financed through H.M. Privy Council



BRILLIANT FLICKERLESS PICTURE

- 750 watt lamp
- Surface treated lenses
- Unique intermittent mechanism

VIVID SOUND REPRODUCTION

- Smooth ripple-free scanning
- 10 watt amplifier—Engineered for 16mm film
- 12" permanent magnet speaker

EASY TO OPERATE

- Quick set-up—Built-in spool arms, instantaneous height adjuster
- Simple threading—Only two sprockets
- Grouped controls—Lamp and motor interlocked

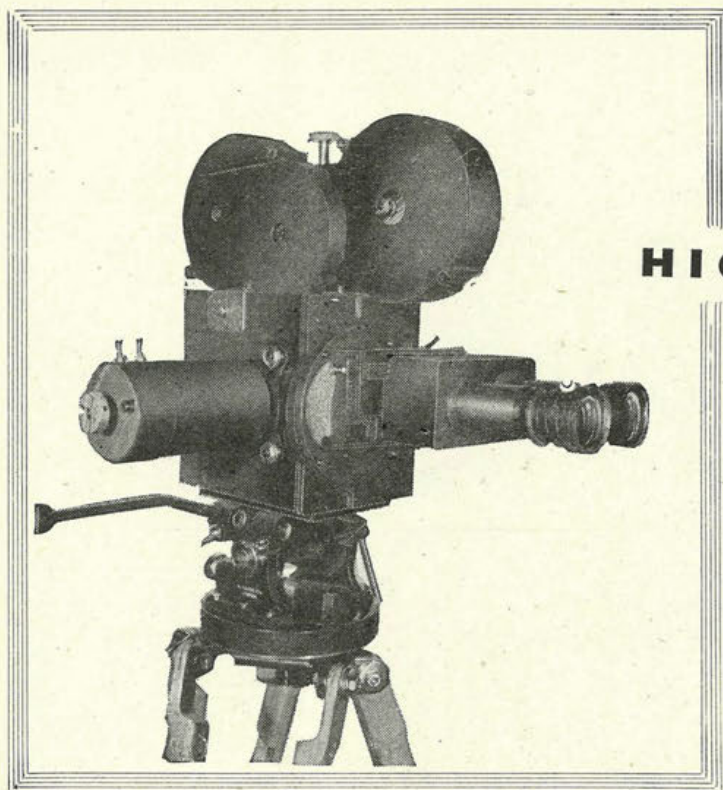
BTH

RUGBY

THE BRITISH THOMSON-HOUSTON COMPANY LIMITED, RUGBY, ENGLAND.

A3715





HIGH SPEED RESEARCH

The high speed cine-camera is to the industrial researcher what the microscope is to the chemist. By giving clear pictures and exposures up to 1/20,000th part of a second the Vinten H.S.300 camera enables extremely accurate observations to be made of fast moving machinery.

In this way the cine-camera provides both a valuable analysis and a permanent record of movement and time. As the leading British Manufacturers of 35 mm. cameras of all types we are always pleased to advise on their application to the special needs of the Industrial scientist. Enquiries should be addressed to—

Vinten

HIGH SPEED CAMERAS

W. VINTEN LTD., North Circular Road, Cricklewood, N.W.2

Telephone: Gladstone 6373

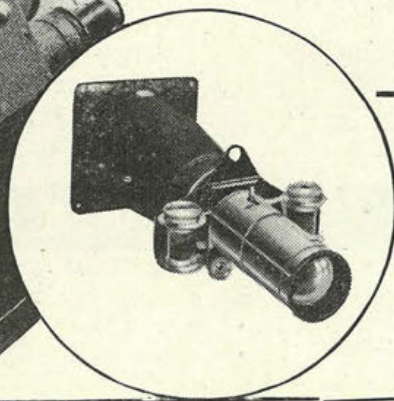
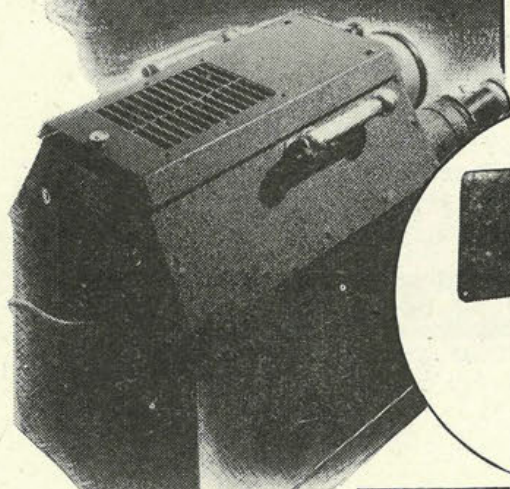
Clifton

THE ROSS EPIDIASCOPE *with special attachment for 35m/m film strip*

Ross Epidiscopes have this great advantage that their use is not limited to a standard slide or specimen.

Film strip, now so popular with the visiting lecturer, can be projected with the same perfect definition associated with the special projectors available for this purpose but with certain advantages for the ROSS in the matter of increased illumination.

The Ross film strip attachment is easily interchangeable with the standard diascope lens on the ROSS Epidiroscope.



**ROSS LIMITED, The Optical Works,
Clapham Common, London, S.W.4**

London Showrooms: 26, Conduit Street, W.1



Clifton (E/8)



**IN PRODUCTION FOR
RELEASE DURING 1947**

FOR SCHOOLS

PENICILLIN (Three short films)
AMMONIA
LIME
SALT
OXYGEN (16 mm. Kodachrome)

FOR INDUSTRIAL TRAINING

THE PAINTING OF BUILDINGS
THE TECHNIQUE OF SPRAY PAINTING
SHOT-FIRING IN COAL-MINES
(All in 16 mm. Kodachrome)

**FOR VETERINARY AND
AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION**

PHENOTHIAZINE PAYS A DIVIDEND
(Parasitic Worms in Farm Animals)
(16 mm. Kodachrome)

FOR MEDICAL EDUCATION

Six subjects in 16 mm. Kodachrome

★ Release dates will be announced

**IMPERIAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES LIMITED
NOBEL HOUSE - LONDON, S.W.1**





There's a big difference . . .

—in the quality of sound, too! In fact, until you've heard our 35-mm. and direct 16-mm. recording you cannot appreciate the brilliance, range and tonal quality or realise just how noiseless a background can be. We offer a comprehensive service which includes 16-mm. recording at 16 f. p. s. You are cordially invited to enquire for further details or visit our London Studios for a demonstration.



Noiseless

Recording

UNITED MOTION PICTURES, LTD.

24, DENMARK STREET, LONDON, W.C.2

TEmpLe Bar 2025/6

A REMINDER

**G. B. I.
WALL CHARTS**
IN COLOUR

READY SHORTLY

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE

Size 35 × 22 in. 4/6 each

LONGITUDE AND TIME

Size 35 × 22 in. 4/6 each

The Rotating Globe—I

24 HOURS—DAY AND NIGHT

Size 40 × 30 in. 5/- each

The Rotating Globe—II

1 YEAR—

UNEQUAL DAY AND NIGHT

Size 40 × 30 in. 5/- each

CITIZENSHIP

(1) THE POLICE FORCE

(2) SEWAGE DISPOSAL

(3) REFUSE AND SALVAGE

Size 40 × 30 in. 5/- each

Other subjects now in preparation include :

HISTORY

ELEMENTARY GEOLOGY

Send your orders or requests for the Chart Catalogue to :

The Education Division (Chart Section)

G.B. INSTRUCTIONAL, LTD.,

Imperial House, 80, 82 Regent Street, London, W.1

N.B.—Cheques, postal orders, etc., must be made out to G.B. Equipments, Ltd., NOT to the Education Division.



FILMS and



FILMSTRIPS now available

British Instructional Films Limited, pioneers of educational films, have now available an increasing number of silent films and filmstrips for direct sale to schools and local authorities. The subjects covered include Geography, Civics, Nature Study and English, for age groups in both Primary and

Secondary schools. The running times of the films vary from 3 minutes to 12 minutes according to the requirements of the subject and the age group. Films are also available for hire through the B.I.F. Library. For full particulars and for copies of the catalogue of educational films and filmstrips apply to:



BRITISH INSTRUCTIONAL FILMS LTD.
in association with **PATHE PICTURES**

FILM HOUSE, WARDOUR STREET, LONDON, W.1. TELEPHONE: GERRARD 4314

Some

British Film Institute *Publications*

FILMS FOR CHILDREN

A verbatim report of a conference 2s. 6d.

CHILDREN'S CINEMA CLUBS

An interim report by Mary C. Parnaby
and Maurice T. Woodhouse 2s. 0d.

A FIRST COURSE IN FILM APPRECIATION

by Ceinwen Jones and F. E. Pardoe 2s. 0d.

THE PRODUCER by Michael Balcon 6d.

THE DIRECTOR by Thorold Dickinson 6d.

SOUND IN FILMS by Ken Cameron 6d.

THE NEED FOR COMPETENT FILM MUSIC CRITICISM

by Hans Keller 2s. 0d.

:: ::

THE HISTORY OF THE BRITISH FILM

1896-1906

The first of a series of volumes, priced
approximately one guinea, to be published by
Messrs. George Allen and Unwin for the

BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

Written by RACHAEL LOW and ROGER
MANVELL under the guidance of a special History
Research Committee.

Fully Illustrated

Ready early in 1948

DANCE-KAUFMANN

'For the first time it is possible for the Science Master
to control the film, instead of being completely at its
mercy.' [Mr. F. A. MEIER.]

CYCLEFILMS

on
Kinetic Theory of Gases
Composition of Harmonic Motions
Propagation of Waves
Reflection and Transmission of Light
Theory of Alternating Currents
Theory of Induction Motors, D.C. and A.C.
Generators, Transformers, Rectifiers,
Cyclotron, etc.
Various Aspects of Mechanical Science
Illustrations from Nature

Also

CRAFTFILMS and CRAFTCYCLES (DRYAD-DANCE-KAUFMANN)

on
Weaving a Waste Paper Basket
Weaving a Scarf on a Roller Loom
Binding a Book

Write for full information to :

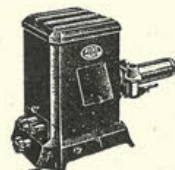
DANCE-KAUFMANN LTD.
18, UPPER STANHOPE STREET
LIVERPOOL, 8

VITAL AIDS to VISUAL EDUCATION

Consult Westminster Photographic whenever
you require visual education equipment. The
items illustrated are only two from a compre-
hensive range. Film strip projectors by Aldis,
Pullin and E.D.P. and screens for all purposes
are available. Send for illustrated catalogue or
call for demonstration.

35mm. ALDIS PROJECTOR

A superlative instrument : but only one of a
comprehensive range of 35mm. projectors
stocked by all branches of Westminster Photo-
graphic. Why not call for a demonstration ?



THE ALDIS EPIDIASCOPE

Projects large screen pictures of diagrams,
book pages, slides, X-ray films and all trans-
parencies. Screen diagrams 7 in. x 7 in. or
without the frame a 9 in. diameter circle.
Booklet sent on request.

The **Westminster**
PHOTOGRAPHIC
Exchange Limited

(Incorporating the London Cine Camera Co., Ltd.)

111, Oxford Street, W.1

24, Charing Cross Road, W.C.2.

81, Strand, W.C.2.

2, St. Stephen's Parade, Westminster Bridge, S.W.1.

119, Victoria Street, S.W.1.

GERrard 1432

TEMPle Bar 7165

TEMPle Bar 9773

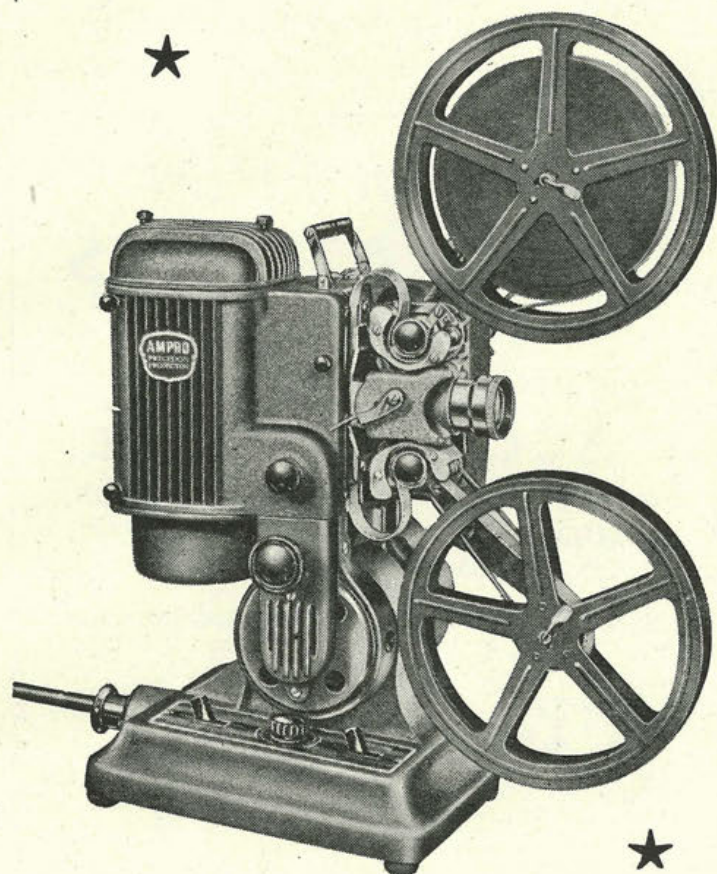
ABBey 1611

VICToria 0669

The AMPRO

16 mm: PRECISION
CINÉ EQUIPMENT

Fitted with Ampro's New Swing Open Gate



The AMPRO 16 mm SILENT IMPERIAL

Ask your local dealer to
arrange a demonstration

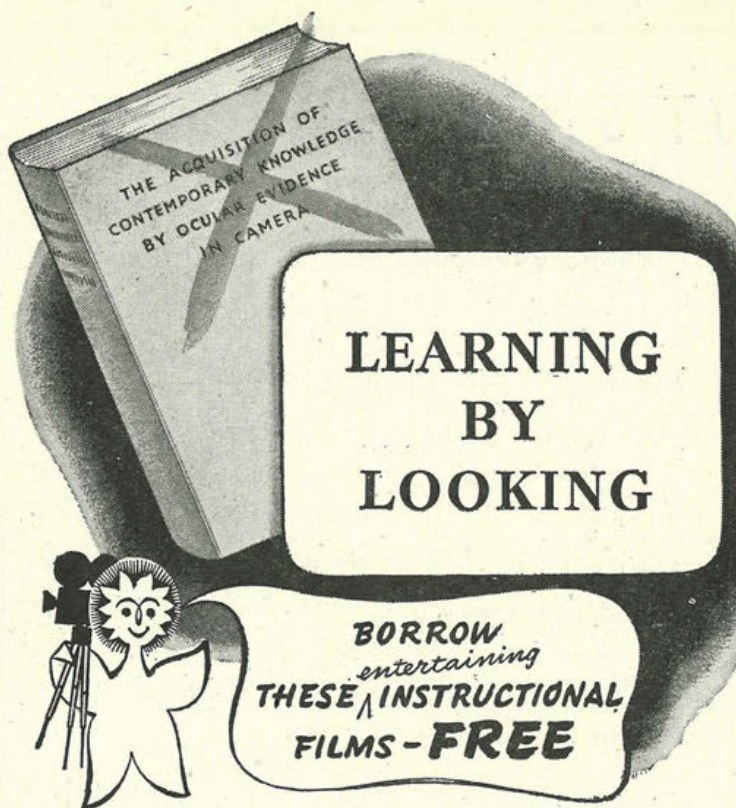
Manufactured in Great Britain
by KELVIN BOTTOMLEY & BAIRD LTD.
at Glasgow and Basingstoke

NOW BEING DISTRIBUTED THROUGH
AUTHORISED AMPRO DEALERS BY

SIMPLEX AMPRO

LIMITED

167 - 169 WARDOUR STREET
LONDON, W.1



LEARNING
BY
LOOKING

BORROW
entertaining
THESE INSTRUCTIONAL
FILMS - FREE

The simple language of pictures makes the documentary film one of the world's greatest popular educators.

Good documentaries are scarce, but a series of interesting and entertaining films on "the world we live in," created for the Gas Industry by some of our most skilled modern documentary producers, is still available to approved borrowers.

Most films are obtainable in silent as well as sound versions, and running times vary from 5 to 30 minutes. Full particulars from your local Gas Undertaking—or post this coupon.

SEND FOR PARTICULARS TO

The Secretary, British Gas Council, 1, Grosvenor Place,
London, S.W.1. Please send, without obligation,
particulars of your films, and booking forms.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

POST IN UNSEALED 1d. STAMPED ENVELOPE

F4

IT'S HARD WORK

these days keeping abreast of all the rapid developments in the use of the 16-mil film.

But readers of **THE FILM USER** find it easy. Each issue brings them . . .

- The latest information on the way visual aids are being used in education and industry.
- Illustrated reviews of new projectors and equipment.
- Practical information enabling the best results to be obtained from your apparatus.
- The new applications of 16-mil; digests of new films and sources of supply.
- The latest methods in screening films for Information, Education and Entertainment.
- The free use of an expertly-staffed Inquiry Bureau.

This comprehensive service costs but 10/- per annum.

(Specimen copy 1/-)

The **FILM USER**

16 millimetre □ filmstrip

(Original Title "16-Mil Film User")

19, CHARING CROSS ROAD, LONDON, W.C.1

WHitehall 0841

CINE SCREENS

EVERY KIND,
AMATEUR AND
PROFESSIONAL

E. G. TURNER,
43-47 Higham St., Walthamstow, E.17

16 m/m FILM LABORATORIES

NEGATIVE DEVELOPING
PRINTING AND TITLING

J. SCOTT-RUSSELL,
7 GREAT CASTLE ST., OXFORD CIRCUS,
LONDON, W.1 'Phone : LANgham 4382

Studio One

Adj. Oxford Circus Underground, W.1.
GERRARD 3300

SEASONAL PRESENTATION
OF

OUTSTANDING FRENCH
BRITISH & AMERICAN
FILMS

Continuous Daily 12.45-11 p.m.; Sundays 4 p.m.-10 p.m.

PRICES:

2/3 ; 3/6 ; 4/6 ; 5/6 ; 7/6 ; 8/6

Bookable : 5/6 ; 7/6 ; 8/6

Special Terms for Parties

Studio Two (News) Theatre in same building

Price 1/- in all parts

A HIRE SERVICE giving of the best in 16mm. films

**16
MM**

Some of the films now available

"Escape to Glory," Pat O'Brien and Constance Bennett - "He Snoops to Conquer," George Formby with Robertson Hare and Elizabeth Allen - "Crime and Punishment," Peter Lorre and Edward Arnold - "The Missing Juror," Jim Bannon, Janis Carter, George MacReady, Jean Stevens - "Sergeant Mike," Larry Parks, Jeanne Bates, and the canine stars Mike and Pearl - "The Devil Commands," Boris Karloff - "Men of the Deep," Chester Morris and Victor McLaglen - Cartoons, Tours, World of Sport, Screen Snapshots, Documentaries, etc., etc.

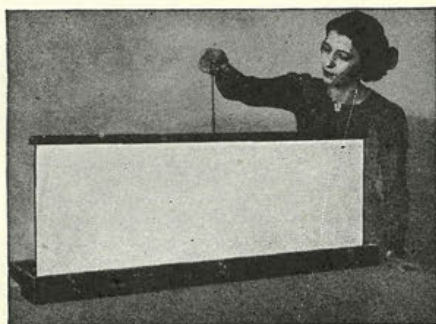
WIGMORE FILMS LTD.

DISTRIBUTORS OF
16MM. SOUND FILMS

Sole distributors of COLUMBIA PICTURES CORPORATION Product in 16mm. for the UNITED KINGDOM (DEPT. S.S.) 35 BEAUFORT GDNS., BROMPTON ROAD, LONDON, S.W.3 Phone: KENSington 1600

ACTINA

SELF ERECTING SCREENS in Rexine covered box



Erected by simply lifting the top bar—closed by a slight pull on the cord and gentle lowering. Beautifully finished. Extremely compact.

"Witelite" Surface. Entirely non-directional—equally brilliant from any angle. Rendering of half-tones is exceptionally fine. Washable, will neither fade nor crease.

Bead Surface. Intensely brilliant. Colour-corrected. Beads will not rub off and are fine to avoid "graininess".

Witelite 40 x 30	£6 0 0	52 x 39	£7 7 6
Beaded 40 x 30	£7 15 0	52 x 39	£9 17 6

Roller Screens also supplied in Beaded, Witelite and Silver surfaces.

Send stamp for detailed list to

10, DANE ST., HIGH HOLBORN, W.C.1

Telephone: CHAncery 7566/7



WALLACE HEATON LTD

BY APPOINTMENT TO H.M. THE KING SUPPLIERS OF PHOTOGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT EVERYTHING FOR CINEMATOGRAPHY
126-127, NEW BOND STREET, LONDON W.1. AND BRANCHES



HAVE YOU SEEN IT?

Every projector user should get a copy of our

NEW FILM LIBRARY CATALOGUE

of 16 mm. Sound Films

It contains 48 pages of first class films with illustrations and synopses, hiring rates and all the necessary details.

Send for your copy to-day
Price 6d. post free

HAVE YOU SEEN - AND HEARD

THE LATEST 16mm. SOUND PROJECTORS

B.T.H. Type 301 - £210 Victor Model 40 - £220
De Brie D.16 - £240

Demonstrations in our Model Theatre

Also available shortly—orders being taken now—Bell and Howell-Gaumont 601 - approx. £237 10s. 0d.

Amprosound Premier 20 - £203

PIONEERS IN EQUIPMENT AND SERVICE
SINCE THE INCEPTION OF 16 mm. FILMS

THE NATIONAL FILM LIBRARY

The Loan Section includes

Film Classics — “Birth of a Nation”, “Caligari”, “Metropolis”,
“Potemkin”, etc., etc.

Composite Films—Cavalcanti’s “Film and Reality”, “Drawings
that Walk and Talk”, etc., etc.

In Preparation — “Edwardian Newsreels”

Full details and terms of hire from the Curator,

National Film Library of
THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE, 4 GT. RUSSELL ST., W.C.1

THE MONTHLY FILM BULLETIN

: *Accurate, Independent, Impartial, Complete* :

Reviews all

Entertainment Films

Documentary Films

Educational Films

Shorts

issued during the month, giving length, distributors, director, producer, leading players,
summary and appraisal in each case.

1s. 6d. per copy, 15s. per annum, post free from

THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE, 4 GT. RUSSELL ST., W.C.1

TOP LINE SCREEN ENTERTAINMENT!

ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S
Production of

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT



Mysterious - Romantic - Thrilling!

Starring **JOEL McCREA** with
LARAINÉ DAY • HERBERT MARSHALL • GEORGE SANDERS
ALBERT BASSERMAN • ROBERT BENCHLEY



★ *A MUSICAL SPECTACLE OF GAIETY, COLOUR AND SONG* ★

FIESTA

A
GLORIOUS
FEATURE
in
Technicolor



★
ANNE AYARS • GEORGE NEGRETE
ARMIDA • GEORGE GIVOT
ANTONIO MORENO
★



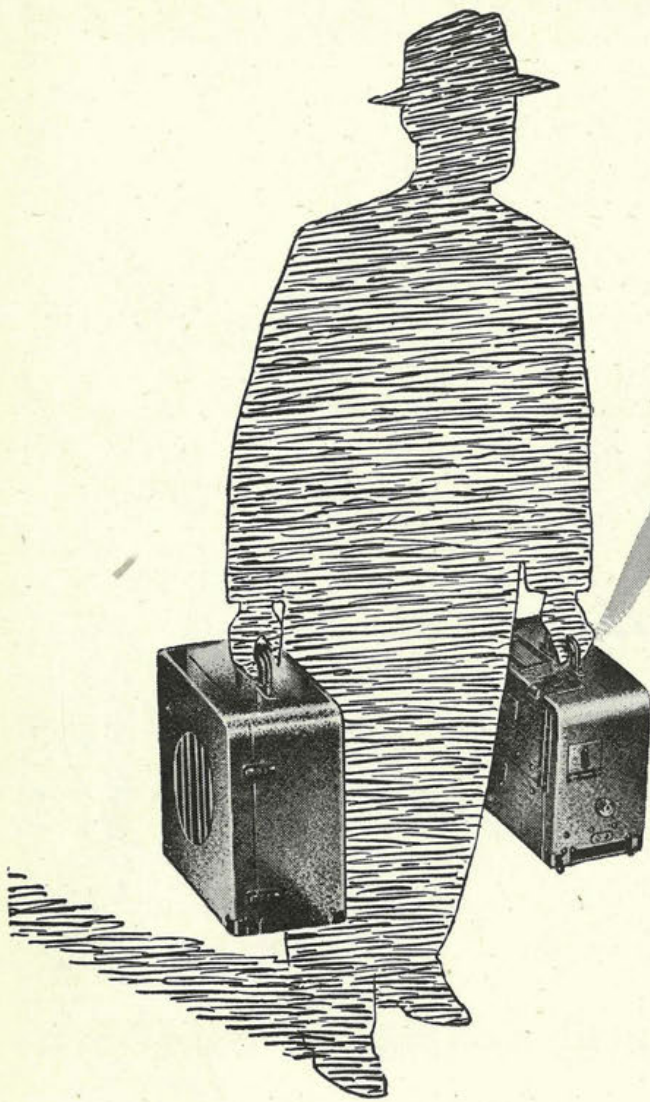
**RON
HARRIS**

16mm. Sound Film Library
63-65, KING ST, MAIDENHEAD

SUPERBLY PRODUCED
IN COLOUR ON
ART PAPER

SEND 7/6 FOR YOUR
COPY NOW

COST REFUNDED ON
YOUR FIRST BOOKING



MAN WITH MOVIE HISTORY IN HIS HANDS

*T*oday two famous names combine to make transatlantic news. To give you soon, for the perfection of your visual education programme, the best of both film-worlds in new, advanced, motion-picture equipment. Bell & Howell in America—Gaumont-British over here, pool their skill and experience to bring you Bell & Howell-Gaumont products. Coming first, from British factories, will be the new Bell & Howell-Gaumont 16 mm. Projector, a masterpiece of

streamlined engineering; incorporating many original and exclusive features; bringing 16 mm. projection very near perfection in sight and sound.

Watch these pages in future issues for details of this new Bell & Howell-Gaumont Projector, designed and built by engineers experienced in the construction of school film equipment to meet the need of Teachers for a safe, fault-proof and trouble-free projector. Meantime, to enable Educational Authorities to place priority orders, convenient demonstrations will gladly be arranged.

YOU WILL BE WISE TO ORDER A

Bell & Howell - Gaumont

AN INTERNATIONAL FILM REVIEW PUBLISHED BY THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

CONTENTS

MONSIEUR VINCENT: by John A. V. Burke	89	"THE LONG NIGHT" AND "LE JOUR SE LÈVE": by Roger Manvell	115
SOUTH AFRICA AND THE CINEMA: by Donald Berry	93	MAURICE JAUBERT: an appreciation by Gerald Cockshott	116
IN SEARCH OF A DIRECTOR: by Oswell Blakeston	96	"FROM CALIGARI TO HITLER": a letter from Mary M. Robson	117
HOLLYWOOD MUSIC: by Anthony Thomas	97	STEREOSCOPIC FILM: by Joseph Macleod	118
JEWELLERY AND THE PERIOD FILM: by M. D. S. Lewis	99	THE QUARTER IN BRITAIN: by Arthur Vesselo	120
THE FIRST PICTURE HOUSE IN THE WORLD: by John Huntley	102	LEGISLATION AND FILM: by H. H. Wollenberg	122
"PURVEYORS OF SPIRITUAL POISON": by S. M. Eisenstein	103	<i>The Film in Education</i>	
ONE THING AFTER ANOTHER: by J. C. Trewin	106	THE CAMBRIDGE EDUCATIONAL FILM COUNCIL: by Stanley Oreanu	124
RELIGIOUS RATIONS: by Andrew Buchanan	107	THE PLANNING OF AN EDUCATIONAL FILM PROGRAMME: by Donald A. Mackenzie	126
TWO HUMAN DANISH FILMS: by Ragna Jackson	109	BOOKS OF THE QUARTER	128
BRITISH FILM MUSIC: a book review by Stuart Keen	111		
THE HORSE: TOTEM ANIMAL OF AMERICAN FILMS: by Parker Tyler	112		

COVER STILL: *Monsieur Vincent* (E.D.I.C.)

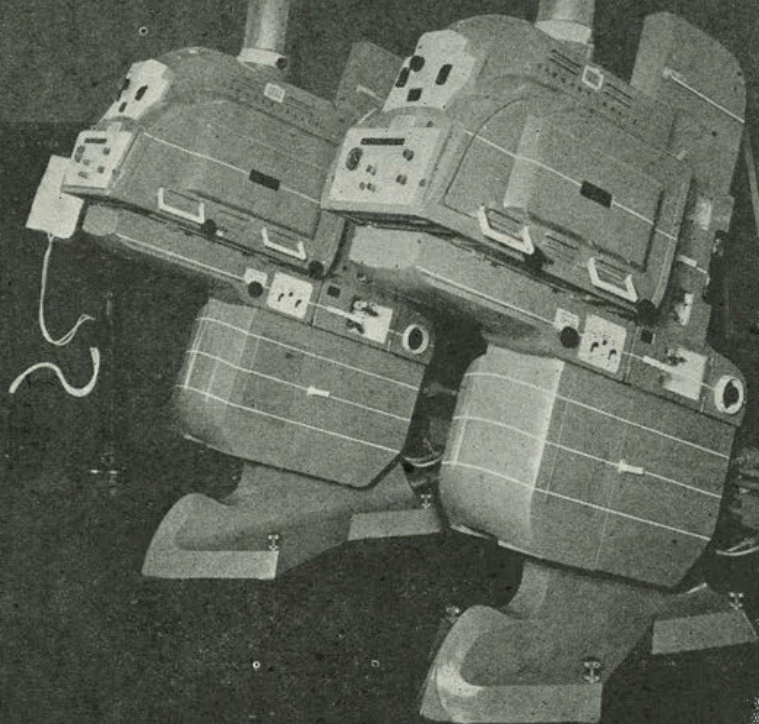
TO READERS

The utmost latitude is given to contributors to SIGHT AND SOUND and, therefore, the opinions expressed in signed articles are not necessarily in agreement with those of the British Film Institute. The COPYRIGHT in all articles published in SIGHT AND SOUND is reserved to the British Film Institute and reproduction without permission is therefore expressly forbidden.

Editorial and Publishing Offices: British Film Institute, 4 Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1., England. Published on the first day of November, February, May and August each year. SIGHT AND SOUND is sent free to members of the Institute. The annual subscription to SIGHT AND SOUND alone is 10s. 6d. including Postage.

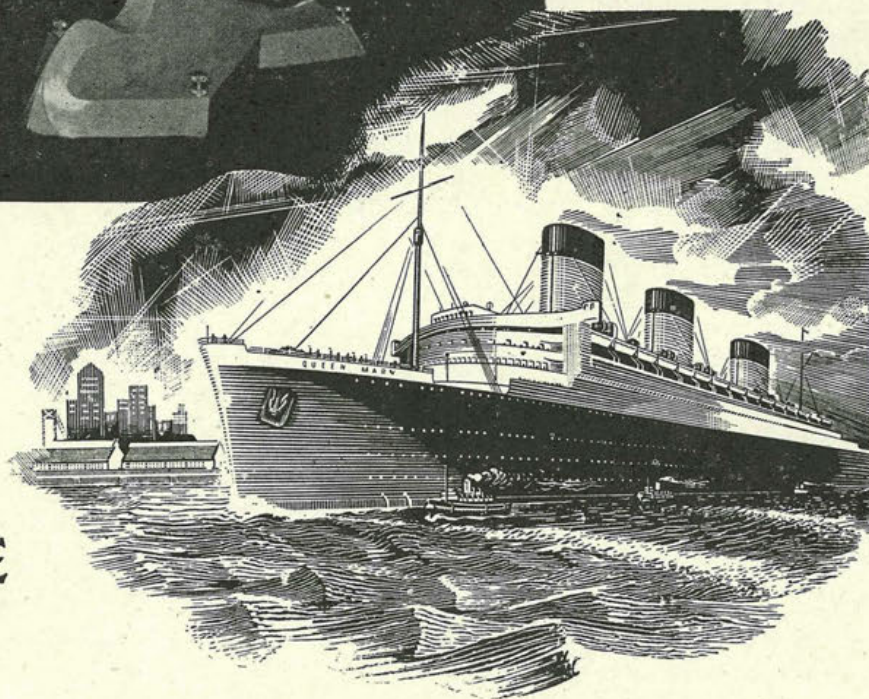
Advertisement Offices: E. E. Preston, 69 Fleet St., London, E.C.4. (Telephone: Central 3952; Telegraphic Address: "ED-PRESS, FLEET, LONDON"). SIGHT AND SOUND is a member of the Audit Bureau of Circulations.

The "QUEEN MARY" selects the latest



Published by courtesy of
CUNARD WHITE STAR
LIMITED

THE GAUMONT-KALEE '21'



The Cunard White Star has constructed a new Cinema in the "Queen Mary" which is acknowledged to be the most replete and magnificent afloat. It seems natural, therefore, that the equipment selected was the new Gaumont-Kalee "21," and we are proud of this additional honour. Now all four theatres on board have been equipped by G.B-Kalee.

G.B-KALEE LTD., 60/66 WARDOUR ST., LONDON, W.1.

GER 9531 (10 lines)



Monsieur Vincent

E.D.I.C.

MONSIEUR VINCENT

By

JOHN A. V. BURKE

There is no subject in the vast literature of the cinema about which more nonsense is written and believed than that of religion in films. I suspect that an almost equal amount of nonsense is written and believed about the power of finance in films. There seems to be an idea current that the Vatican, backed by unlimited wealth, has huge forces deployed over strategic points of the film front, controlling the cinema and strangling true art; imposing the tenets and liturgical niceties of a foreign sect on the freedom-loving Protestants and pagans of the New World.

The prosaic facts are much more dismal. Far from the Catholic Church reaping any benefit from the fact that many of the denizens of Culver City were once practising Catholics, the rarified atmosphere of the studios seems to detach them all too readily from their allegiance to Christian faith and morals, so that one hesitates to refer to any well-known player as a Catholic for fear that they may, in

the meantime, have taken somebody else's wife or husband to live with.

Nor is the negative attitude towards films adopted by the Legion of Decency very much consolation. True, it has done magnificent service in focusing attention on the unhealthy and unsocial trend in films of yesteryear and has helped to warn conscientious cinema-goers about the deleterious elements in such and such a film of today. On the other hand, it has had no constructive criticism to make of films which, on account of a Roman collar or a coif, easily worn by well-known players, are dubbed 'religious' and 'Catholic' films, but which are, in fact, often the most sickening sentimental, melodramatic, Moody and Sankey hokum.

It is difficult to estimate the amount of harm among thoughtful people that is done by the over-enthusiastic applause given to films like *Bells of St. Mary's*, *Keys of*

The Kingdom, or Dead Reckoning, or that quite undefinable French film *Anges du Peché*, which M-G-M recently tried to sell to a Catholic organisation!

THE UNTHINKING

To suppose that Leo McCarey is either altruistic or a competent moral theologian is to assume too much. *Going My Way* was such a financial success that the formula *had* to be repeated. It was only after prolonged discussions with Father Devlin that he was induced to honour the decencies and allow the child in *Bells of St. Mary's* to be born in wedlock. As it emerged, the film was a pitiable attempt to gain kudos at the expense of orthodoxy. Granted several moments of authentic spiritual insight, chiefly on the part of the non-Catholic Ingrid Bergmann, the overall effect on the mind of non-Catholics was one of shady practice and shallow 'conversion'. The fact is that the Church had nothing to do with the film beyond the negative counsel that certain elements in it would give needless offence to sensitive persons. Nevertheless, it remains labelled by unthinking enthusiasts and antagonists alike as a 'Catholic' and 'religious' film.

I think it is true to say that, in fact, the Church has had no financial interest in any film, nor, until the advent of

the film which is the main subject of this article, has it been safe to define a film as a truly "religious"—with the possible exception of the *Song of Bernadette*, and Duvivier's *Golgotha*.

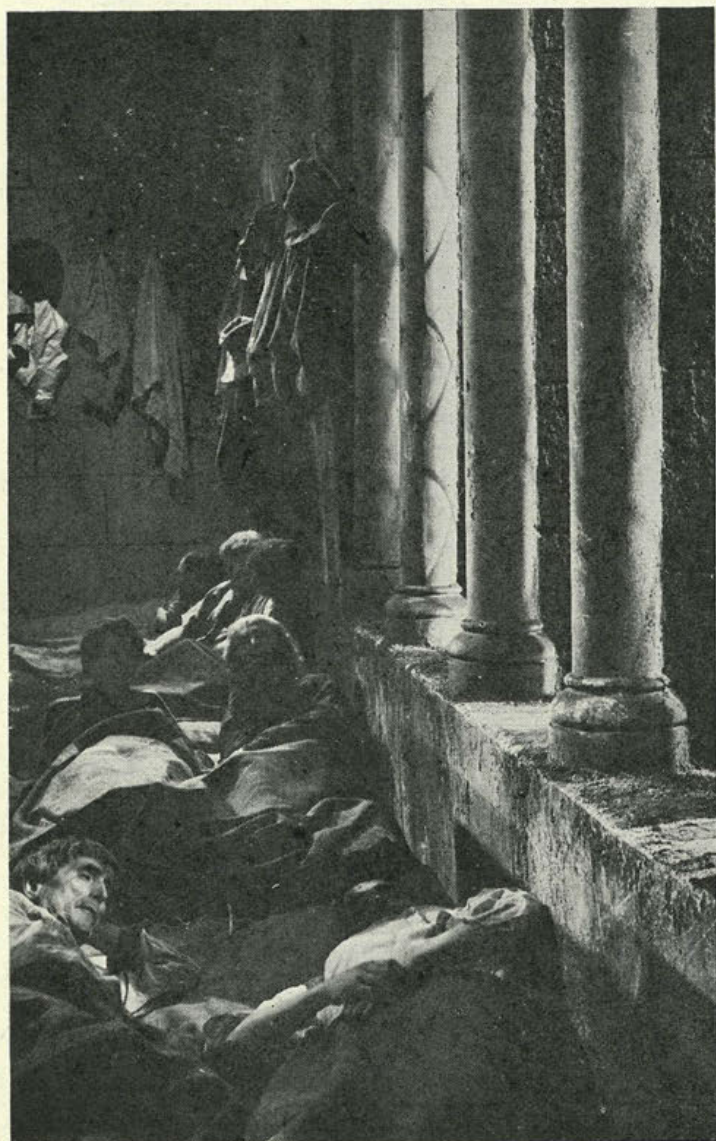
Monsieur Vincent opens up an entirely new vista in the ethics and economics of film production. Maurice Cloche, a cineaste of great distinction in France, had, for years, been filled with the idea of making a film based on the life of that extraordinary personage of the French XVIth century, Vincent de Paul. Few people in this country have any idea of the extent to which the life and story of this man coloured the social background of religious activities in France. Indeed, in English speaking countries, too, the name of St. Vincent de Paul stands for an Order of practical charity and social relief which not even the Salvation Army has excelled. Wherever there is a parish large enough to need the efforts of organised charity, there will be found a group of laymen belonging to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, going quietly about their work of social relief. One of the best-known Orders of Women is that of the Sisters of Charity, or Vincentian Sisters, whose large flappy headdress can be seen in all these streets of France where the needs of poverty-stricken people call them.

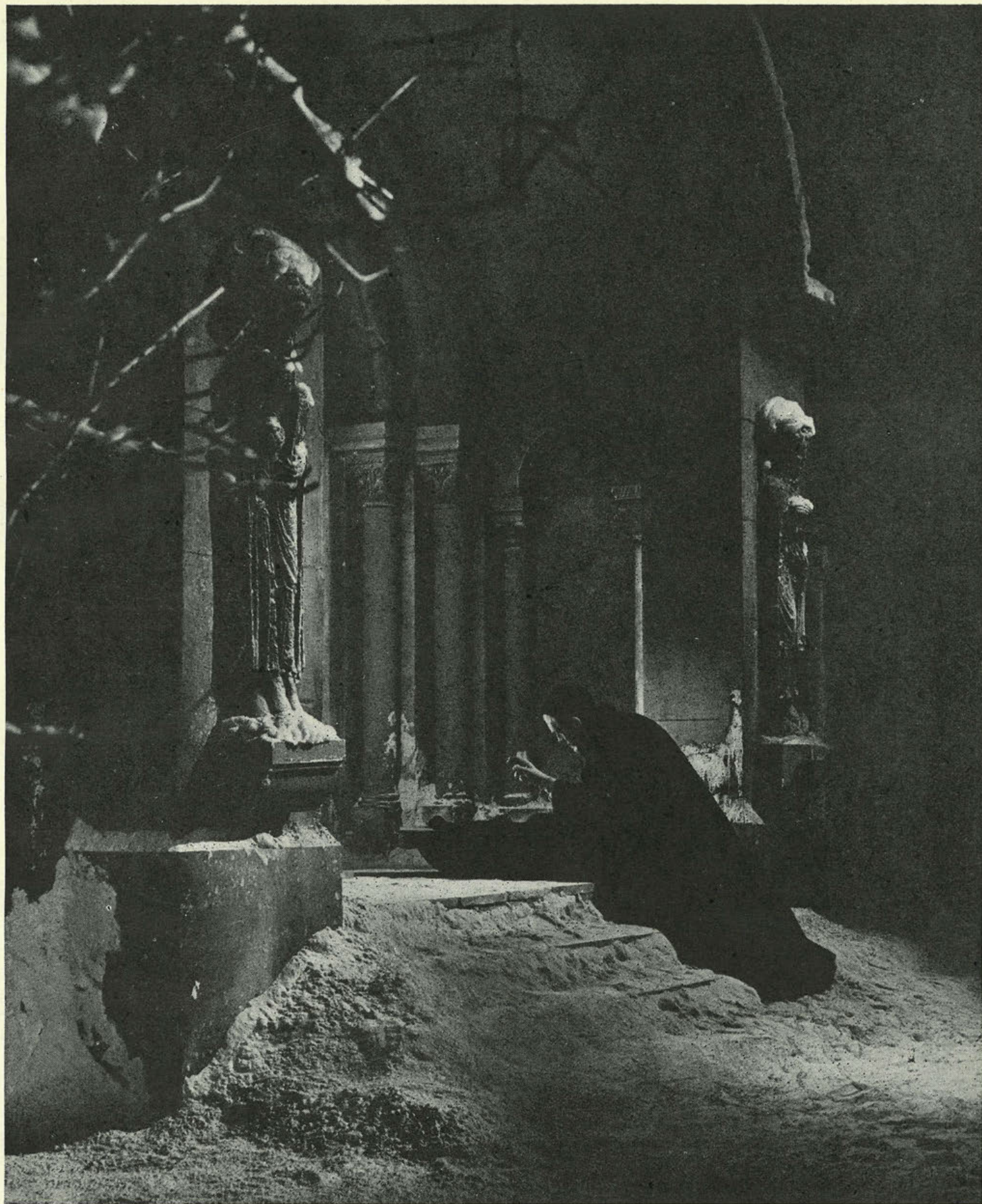
Monsieur Vincent is the story of a remarkable little priest who became the pioneer of social welfare work for unwanted children, who organised the erection and staffing of hospitals for the poorer classes, whose experiences as a Mohammedan slave and his work among the galley slaves were the source and inspiration of his unflinching efforts to secure the amelioration and eventual liberation of these unfortunates. He was declared a Saint by the Church in 1737.

It was the life of this man which Maurice Cloche decided to film, when, in 1942, he consulted the archives of the Lazarist Fathers (the Order of priests founded by St. Vincent de Paul) and sought the collaboration of the historian Maxemilian Vox, and the writer La Varende. The material collected and the historical fresco which resulted assumed such vast proportions, however, that the producers were frightened away by the thought of the large sum that would be necessary for its realisation. Thus the project rested until the moment of the Liberation.

It was at the beginning of 1946 that Maurice Cloche suddenly conceived the idea of raising the money required for the production of the film by means of a national subscription. To this end he enlisted the support of the Catholic cultural group known as "l'Office Familial de Documentation Artistique" (O.F.D.A.), whose President, George de la Grandiere, undertook the organisation of appeals throughout all the parishes of France. A *Monsieur Vincent Association* was formed. Sums of varying size were collected. Subscriptions of 1,000 francs were regarded as shares in the undertaking, to be repaid when profits begin to return.

The previous attempts to reduce the standard lives of the Saint to film requirements were abandoned and the task of producing a script was entrusted to Jean Bernard-Luc and Jean Anouilh. The latter is a well-known French dramatist whose play "Antigone" is enjoying great success in Paris and has been suggested for London with Ann Todd in the leading role. Though he is an agnostic, the life of





*"Monsieur Vincent" was directed by Maurice Cloche with Roger Corbeau as chief cameraman.
Principal cast: St. Vincent de Paul, Pierre Fresnay; Cardinal Richelieu, Aimé Clariond;
Anne of Austria, Germaine Dermoz*

Vincent de Paul so captivated Jean Anouilh that he produced a script and dialogue of remarkable sensitivity and brilliance, on the strength of which, Julian Duvivier demanded his services in writing the dialogue of the new *Dame aux Camelias* which Duvivier is to produce in London.

AN AUTHENTIC RELIGIOUS FILM

It must not be thought that *Monsieur Vincent* can be dismissed as an affair of village curés and holy water, sermons and 'bondieu-series'. Nor is it merely a piece of French historical play-acting, costumes and bravura. Nor, indeed, consciously the life of a saint. It is, and remains primarily, an excellent piece of film production inspired by the life of a simple man with a dominating idea, the love of his fellow men. It is for that reason that I have no hesitation in describing it as an authentic religious film. Its religious atmosphere flows out of the very essence of the thing. It is not a conscious effort to edify or astonish or weedle one's sympathies. In the words of Jean Bernard-Luc, "For Jean Anouilh and for me Vincent de Paul was neither a curé nor a historical personage nor a saint who led an edifying life. He was a simple "monsieur" whom we have thought of as a weak swimmer who unhesitatingly throws himself into a deep river and with calm, regular strokes sets about conquering the current. For the idea of charity which burned in the soul of Monsieur Vincent was the maddest and most ridiculous of sentiments with which to face an epoch in which a ferocious and subtle machiavellianism was the only law, and for many, the only belief".

After much discussion, it was decided to ask Pierre Fresnay to play the part of Monsieur Vincent. A better choice could hardly have been made. It is no exaggeration to say that Pierre Fresnay is the best all-round actor on the French screen. Gifted as France is with players of great talent, few have that immense versatility which is the peculiar characteristic of Fresnay. Each part that he undertakes becomes, so to say, a reincarnation of the character he is portraying. This is particularly true of the role of St. Vincent de Paul. Protestant though he is, when I saw him moving around the studio at Buttes Chaumont in April last, I could conceive of no one able more convincingly to live the part of Monsieur Vincent. He has given it untiring care and has thrown himself into the life of one who was the very quintessence of all that is most Catholic and French in a manner that could not have been excelled by the most ardent Catholic. The rushes that I saw at Buttes Chaumont, unedited though they were, breathed a peculiar air of intensity and conviction which caused one to be brought up with a jerk when the uncut film turned to another sequence. It is no wonder that the not-conspicuously clerical French film industry have chosen *Monsieur Vincent* to be one of the four or five films to represent them at the Biennale at Venice.

The other actors, well-known and tyro, who support Fresnay in this splendid historical production are worthy of the occasion. The Richelieu of Aimé Clariond satisfies the requirements of both historians and romance readers as to physique and manner. Jean Debucourt and Lise Delamare as M. and Mme. de Gondy, Germaine Dermoz as Anne of Austria and Yvonne Godeau as Louise Marillac, the first Sister of Charity, contribute convincing portraits.

The stills which illustrate the present issue of SIGHT AND SOUND will serve to indicate the standard of excellence achieved both by camera man and art director. Claude Renoir, brother to Jean and Pierre, uses his camera with the utmost integrity. There is no preciousness or straining after effect. The groupings and compositions are impressive without being startling or in any way self-consciously bizarre. The film is, in fact, so full of natural vitality that the intrusion of any attempt at art for art's sake could only confuse and distort it.

Rene Renoux, who is responsible for the decors has, since *Le Capitain* and *La Symphonie Pastorale*, been in great demand in the French cinema. His treatment of *Monsieur Vincent* is the most impressive thing seen in a period piece for a long time. One interesting point is worth mention. Where it is a question of the interiors and costumes of the well-to-do characters, Renoux has gone to great trouble to ensure absolute historical authenticity. In the homes and habits of the poor, on the other hand, he has achieved a kind of timeless degradation. "The poor you have always with you". The problem is not yet solved.

Maurice Cloche, the director, has avoided the temptation to give way to the merely picturesque or historic. His sole purpose was to give to the dream of Vincent de Paul the living form of a fight that is not yet finished, the fight for social justice. *Monsieur Vincent* is first and foremost a social film, it might even be called a socialist film, in the best sense of that ill-used word.

If negotiations with Mr. Rank are successful, *Monsieur Vincent* will be given general distribution in this country. It will be interesting to note the reactions of those critics who are usually so eager to decry any film with a Catholic note in it. Will they be ready to recognise the difference between the real and the phoney religious atmosphere? What is more to the point, will the orthodox be ready to recant their exaggerated praise of the hokum which has been hailed as 'Catholic' hitherto?

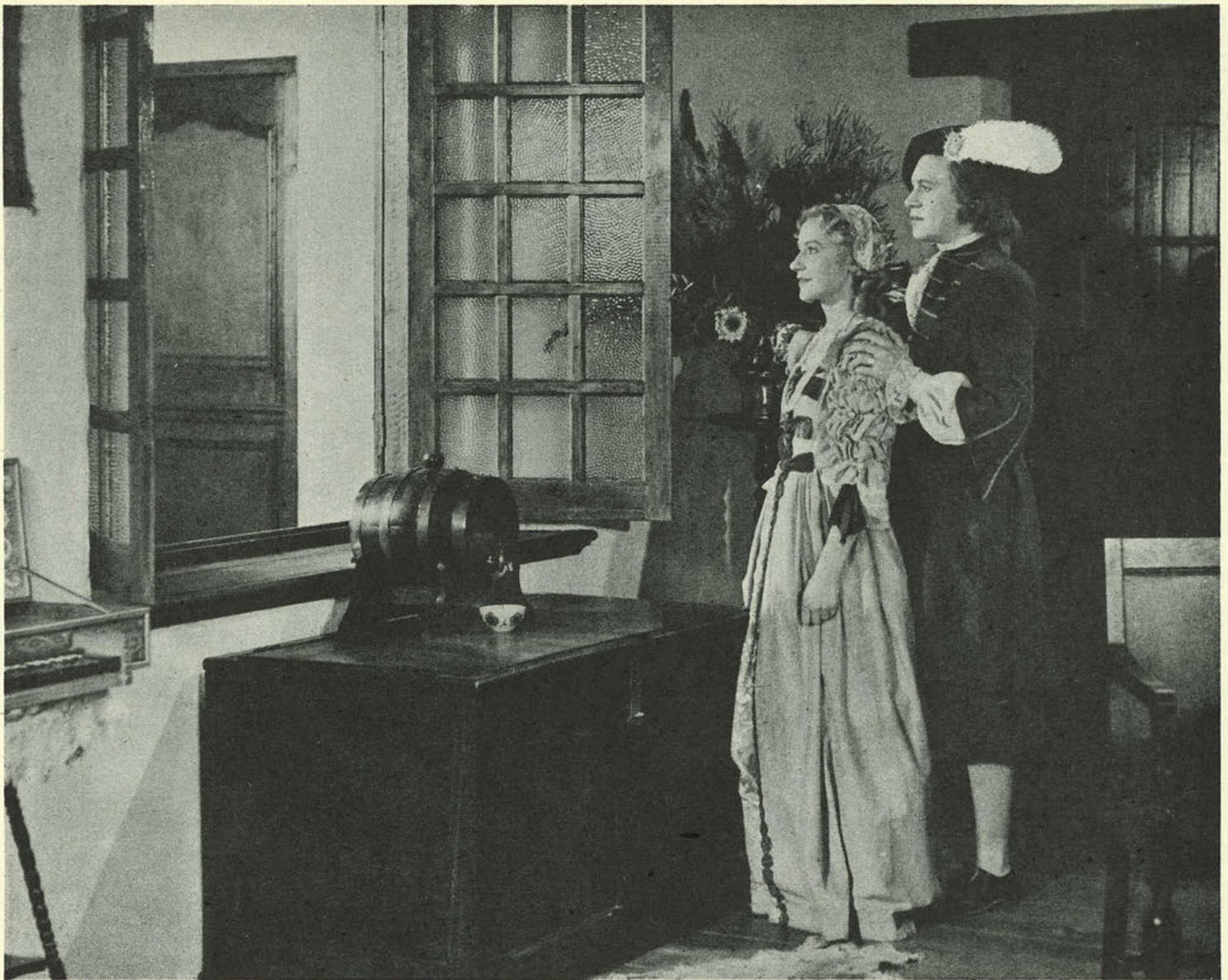
A further point: will they take the hint given them by Maurice Cloche and make themselves independent of the financial dictators when they find themselves with a theme worthy of sound film representation?

A HOLLYWOOD FILM SOCIETY

Organised on an ambitious scale, the Hollywood Film Society has been formed by a group "which regrets that it has not seen or has no regular opportunities for seeing the great films of the past and those films which, in retrospect, have played an important part in the development of the motion picture".

The Society is divided into four sections dealing with feature films, documentary, film history and children's films respectively. Programmes, judging by those received by SIGHT AND SOUND, are of exceptional interest, and it is pleasant to note that such famous British documentaries as *Night Mail*, *Granton Trawler* and *Spanish Earth* are featured. Secretary is Paul Ballard, c/o Coronet Theatre, 366, No. La Cienega, Los Angeles, 36.

The Los Angeles County Museum of History, Science and Art is also including showings of documentary films among its regular Sunday afternoon programmes.



Simon Beyers

African Film Productions

SOUTH AFRICA AND THE CINEMA

By

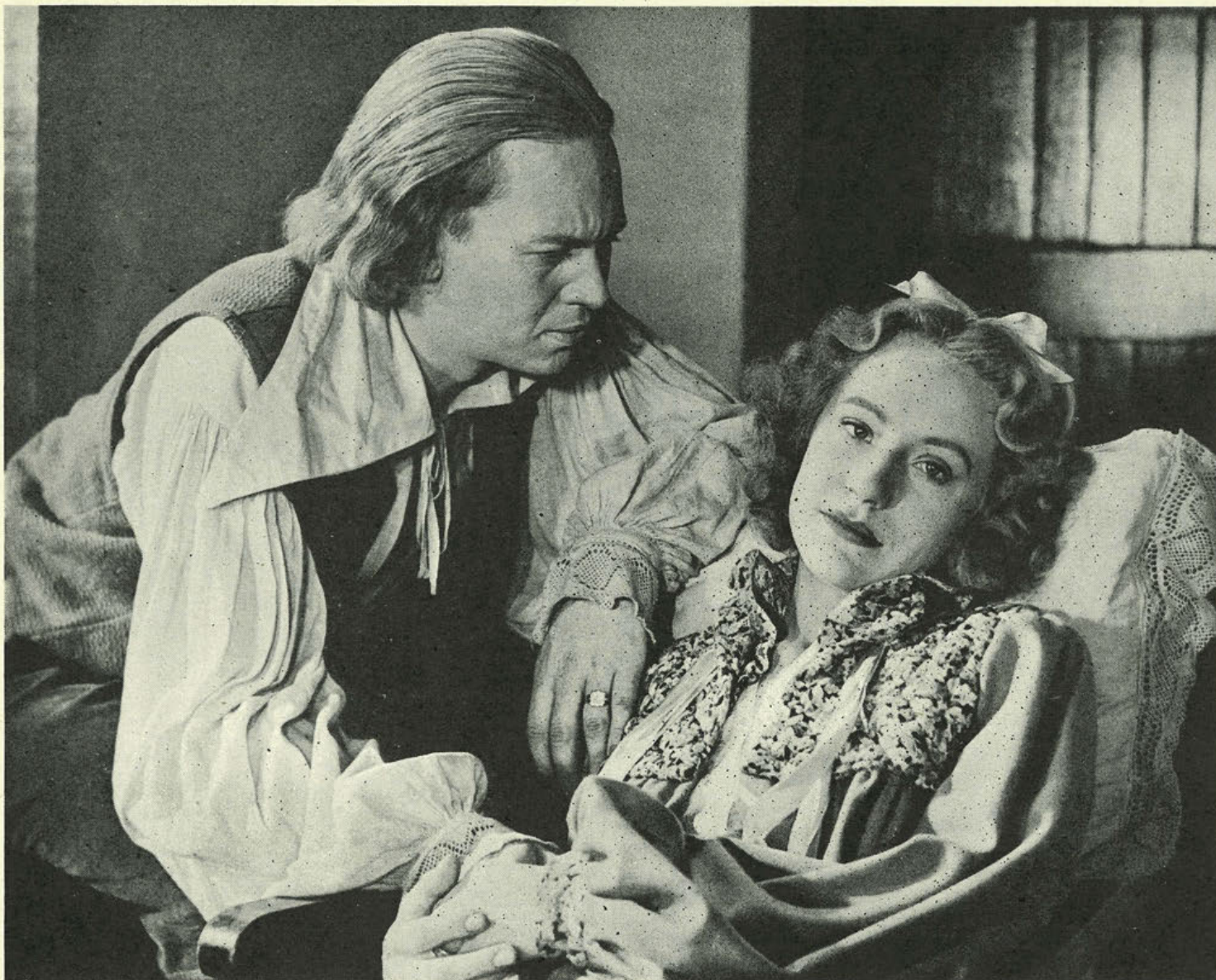
DONALD BERRY

CONSIDERABLE INTEREST was aroused in South Africa by the recent announcement that J. Arthur Rank was to produce a series of films in the Union. That the country is wide open for expansion in this field is as plain as a pikestaff, and what *The Overlanders* did for Australia could be repeated here by, say, Stuart Cloete's *Turning Wheels*.

Up to the present only two full-length films have been produced by the Company with which Mr. Rank is to associate and both were in Afrikaans. The first was an experimental but successful historical production titled *Geboortegrond*. The second, which is now awaiting first public presentation, is *Simon Beyers*, an adaptation of a play which toured the Union "Die Goeie Oue Tyd." The film was

produced at Killarney, the home of African Film Productions, just outside Johannesburg.

Pierre de Wet, who plays the title role besides directing and writing the scenario, appears to be maturing into the "boy-wonder" of South-African films. He is certainly needed, because there is no one with sufficient imagination and personality to mould an art form of any dimensions. It is to be hoped that if Rank (and Sir Alexander Korda, so we are told) do commence production, they will not try to form another Denham or Pinewood, and to continue the English subtlety in South African films. It may be corny to say this, but the wide-open spaces of Southern Africa will have to be the slave-masters, they must be brought to the screen as they are now. The grand stories of the Great



Simon Beyers

African Film Productions

Trek, of Rhodes and Smuts, the gold-mines, of the inevitable sunshine which pours down on the many beauty spots—those are the themes for Messrs. Rank and Korda.

scale. New studios are in the course of erection and will be able to turn out between eight and twelve productions yearly.

NEW STUDIOS

A small independent company, Union Film Productions Ltd., produced two Afrikaans films in 1945-46, *Die Wildsboudjie** and *Scorpion*. Their current production, *Sarie Marais*, is now ready for release and a representative of the company has said that this film is expected to set a new standard, because the most up-to-date type of British movie camera has been imported, together with an experienced Swedish cameraman.

It is believed that certain South African film interests are contemplating the possibility of getting a motion introduced into the House of Assembly requiring that a certain quota of Afrikaans films be screened by cinemas in the Union. It is estimated that the quota will be at least 15 per cent. of each cinema's playing time. The "Rand Daily Mail" speaking editorially on this subject has the following to say.

"... the project should provide a fine opportunity for any M.P. who wishes to commit political suicide. All he has to do is to introduce a motion of that kind ... if 15 per cent. of all films shown are to be Afrikaans, it would only require an extra trailer or two, a slightly longer interval, and a few more of those talking advertisements which our readers so heartily enjoy, to make it really unnecessary to show a full-length film at all".

* Illustrated and described in SIGHT and SOUND, Winter 1945-46.

The "talking advertisements" just mentioned are more than a fill-up for the programme. They are a part of the life out here. The Filmlets (as they are called) are screened before the show begins and again during the interval, and consist of 40 to 60 second "playlets". Some are quite ingenious and conceal the product being advertised until the very end. When the bottle of beer, or box of chocolates, or fountain-pen is disclosed, the camera tracks up to said object with great speed and the audience gulps and moans with glee. Photography and acting are on a "High-School" basis, somewhat naive, but audiences seem to enjoy them, and, no doubt, the sponsors consider their products are "getting-over" to the public.

Referring back to *Simon Beyers*, which is the most important film yet produced in the Union, the story is set in the 17th century and is based upon fact. A certain Governor, Simon van der Stel, imported fifty orphan girls from Holland to become the brides of unmarried Free Burghers at the Cape. Marie and Simon Beyers were one of the pairs whose marriage had been "arranged". The journey from Holland, which had been long and dangerous, had made poor Marie unattractive, and Simon was disappointed when first he saw her. The marriage takes place, but Simon continues to be cruel and shows distinct coldness towards his bride. Simon's brother, a happy-go-lucky lad, is stricken with small-pox whilst out on a hunting trip. Marie, risking her life, follows him into the veld and nurses him well again. Through this deed she wins Simon's respect. How she brings the brother back home and other events are highlights of the film. The story content appears to be particularly strong and light relief is introduced through humour, song and dance.

FUTURE OF AFRIKAANS FILMS

It should be placed on record, however, that it is very doubtful if Afrikaans-speaking films will ever really get to be nationally popular. American and British productions are staple fare, they are liked and respected, although here, as in most places these days, the current topic is the growing enthusiasm with which British films are greeted. "J. Arthur Rank Presents . . ." appears outside three or four of the Johannesburg cinemas at the present time and *A Matter of Life and Death* and *Great Expectations* have been acclaimed as screen-masterpieces, pushing American specimens such as *Devotion* and *The Yearling* out of view. The Rank two-reel feature *This Modern Age* has, at last, filtered through and the first in the series, "Scotland Yard", has won golden opinions.

The cultural life of the country is just awakening and a national art form (in any art you care to mention) has yet to materialise. The theatre is run, mostly, by amateurs and no playwright of repute has been discovered. The script-writer is still an unknown quantity and whether Mr. Rank will import his writers with other technical staff has not been disclosed. We fear, however, that he will find it necessary to do so.

A growing interest in the study of the sociological aspects of the film is apparent. Johannesburg, Cape Town and other cities have film societies, where educational, documentary and old features are shown at monthly meetings. Johannesburg has an amateur cine club which

produced a colour-version of the Royal tour. The film has been shown to the public in the City Hall and received a great ovation. The several different "set-ups" on the many ceremonies indicate that the club has a host of faithful addicts, all very capable with the colour medium.

NOT CONTINUOUS

It may surprise readers to know that in the big cinemas of Johannesburg on some days of the week there is only one performance. It starts at 8 in the evening and lasts about two and a half hours. Three days of the week there are matinees and on Saturday two shows in the evening. There are no continuous shows and all seats are bookable. Immigrants from the old country are commenting on the difference between the "grind" policy of London cinemas and the sedate shows of the Union.

The future is bright. The land, compared with other countries, is flowing with milk and honey. The population is increasing immeasurably faster than anywhere else in the world. Once building restrictions are lifted there will be no stopping general expansion.

The cinema in South Africa has great possibilities and when the current monopoly (African Consolidated Films) is challenged by newcomers (Korda and William Boxer's Alexander-Alpha Films) courageous steps forward can be visualised. Estimations suggest that as short a time as a year will see South African films a distinct asset to world entertainment.

With the present state of the world it's an objective to be admired and respected.

A NOTE FROM ANDREW BUCHANAN

TO THE EDITOR, SIGHT AND SOUND

SIR,—Miss Mary Field, reviewing my book, "Going to the Cinema", in your Summer issue, is rightly puzzled by the space I devoted to the *March of Time* whilst making no reference to its British counterpart, *This Modern Age*. The answer lies in the dreadfully slow tempo of book production in this modern age. When the book went to press, the British Series had not appeared. When it was published, the Series had established itself! However, a second revised edition of the book will appear shortly, containing a tribute to *This Modern Age*.

Miss Field regrets I referred to educational films as if they had just been invented by the Ministry of Education, instead of making it clear that such films were famous long before 1939; she also wishes I had explained that diagrams are not a mere adjunct of documentary films, but constitute a special branch of production.

To both these points may I say that the book is addressed to *children*, who are more interested in the shape of films to come than in pioneering efforts made before they were born or when they were in cradles.

Had the book been a detailed history of the educational and diagrammatic film, most certainly should such explanations have been included, but my book is intentionally a simple and not too detailed survey of film-making, designed to hold the interest of children throughout, and not to bother them with matters which are really of interest only to film-makers and educationalists.

Yours faithfully,
ANDREW BUCHANAN.

IN SEARCH OF A DIRECTOR

By

OSWELL BLAKESTON

THERE ARE MANY basic film facts we take for granted, but which we ought to review from time to time and mentally rearrange in order to check up on current criticism and appreciation. It is a bad thing for criticism to get out of touch with basic facts. For instance, we talk so much about the qualifications a director needs to make a good picture (world view, style, inspiration, etc.) that we are often in danger of defining new terms for a director without relating them to the qualifications a man needs in order to make anything that can reasonably be called a film.

I have recently had an opportunity to watch some paper plans, which might have become a film, materialise in the form of celluloid charades. Reason—the director lacked basic qualifications. Such a terrifying object lesson was a salutary reminder of the importance of keeping in touch with the things we all know but forget; and I sincerely believe it is worth reminding others of the basic facts which I was forced to reconsider.

In a recent interview I had with David Lean, he said: "The director has to give orders, and he must give possible orders. It is no use asking the sound-man or the cameraman to do something which is beyond the limits of sound recording or camera work. The director must also be able to protect himself from technicians who might persuade him that the possible is impossible". So much is clear, then—that the director must be a technician of technicians.

In one of this season's better American pictures—a film which has many points of outstanding interest—there is a sequence with two actors sitting in a car, driving by night through back-projected country roads. But whenever another car's headlights flash up on the matt-glass screen, there is no echoing light on the faces of the actors. The lighting experts, the cameramen, the continuity girls, etc., overlooked this detail. The director should have been on to them at once.

Yet it is not merely a question of a director being aware of points which others overlook, it's a business of the director knowing his technique as root principle. For example, Lean reminded me that you can judge a good film actor in the cutting room by the number of frames you can cut before and after a line of dialogue. With a bad actor, you can cut the picture so that it starts with the first word and ends with the last. The good screen actor gives you the moment of facial expression which is a preparation for the line, and then the expression at the end of the line which anticipates reactions from the other artiste or artistes. If the director knows all this, from practical experience in the cutting room, he knows that much more about handling actors.

One of the director's basic gifts must be the ability to handle actors. He must provide the film actor with the perfect audience. He must give the actor confidence, so that an artiste feels that if he (or she) has pleased the director, he (or she) has done something worthwhile.

Lubitsch used to direct from the top of a step ladder. During a take, Lubitsch sat conspicuously on top of the ladder rocking with laughter. Then he came down from his ladder, and, still roaring with laughter, he told the actors how wonderful they were but (between bubbles of laughter) "wouldn't it perhaps be just a little funnier if . . ." And so there was a retake without any injured feelings or any lack of confidence on the part of the artistes. Lubitsch gets everything from his actors because he gives them everything as their audience.

SNAP DECISIONS

I have heard a famous director say he felt it was fatal to show one moment of uncertainty on the floor. If he ever found himself unable to make up his mind about an actor's interpretation, he thought it better to give a snap decision and be wrong, than to dither. He said to me: "Far better to have a retake of a scene later—and tell the actor something slipped with the camerawork—than suggest indecision. The retake may be a bad mark against me, the director, in the production office; but if I let the artistes lose confidence in me, I might bring the whole production into a state of collapse".

In dealing with artistes, the director needs imagination. Yes, unlimited imagination. He has to "throw himself in and out of the parts" as an American director puts it. He has to think: "Now what would it feel like to be that old woman. What would she do next"? And then the director has to have the imagination to *insinuate* his imagination into the actor. It's no good for the director to show the actor what to do unless he is himself a brilliant actor. The artiste will only copy bad acting. The director has to be able to tell the scene to an actor in such a way that he will get the response he wants. The symbols, the metaphors he uses in describing the scene must be chosen so that they suggest the mood the director aims to achieve. "Insinuate" is precisely the word.

Of course it is of basic importance that a director should be a story-teller par excellence. The whole business of film technique is, in essence, story telling. A job of film direction is telling a story so that the audience is not allowed to take their eyes off the screen for one moment. All of which seems pretty obvious, yet one knows from experience the need to stress the fact that cinema is story telling in pictures.

Intelligent people, who have got out of touch with basic facts, advise directors that they have just read a book or seen a play which would make a marvellous film. In reality, these people nearly always recommend something which would become the sort of film they would despise if they saw it on the screen. They would say: "That isn't a film—that's a photographed book or play". In other words—they haven't tried to tell themselves the story in pictures; they haven't translated the book or play into a series of "watch this" moments.

Inevitably, a director may not always be able to tell the story he wants to relate. He may have to tackle a film about two deaf mutes who communicate with the finger alphabet while the dialogue is printed in captions at the foot of the film—and he has to make a compelling job of it. The director has to grasp someone else's story imaginatively, and determine the mood, for that story, of the various scenes. And then there are so many people who have ideas of their own, who are only too willing to come between the director and his intention.

The basic director has to be a diplomat who can get cameraman, costume designer and even the sound man to accept the mood in which *he* wants to play a scene. If he has decided to play (say) a bank robbery "against the scene", if he wishes to keep the voices of the gangsters in a monotonous whisper instead of barked commands, he has got to get the sound department to co-operate and not play up the voices. If he wants the mood of a scene to be over-life size, a little bit ham but with a direct punch, he has got to convince the art director that it would be better to have the set with a bravura dash to it. If he wants a flat bit of photography, he's got to woo the cameraman into forsaking his prize tricks and glitters.

For the hardest basic task of a director is to control the mood of a scene. Film lovers, who have lost contact with basic film fact, do not think of this problem in relation to the director. They begin to imagine a director's main task is to supply "little touches" which make the action more vivid. You can hear audiences discussing their "improvements" as they stream out of the theatre. They may be right or they may be wrong—but only a professional director could tell them. There is so much more to be weighed in the balance than just the striking effect of a bit of action.

A director may wish deliberately to underpoint a scene, so that, having lulled the audience into a sense of truth,

they will accept some magnified dramatic surprise in the next scene. The director may leave out a touch because he is carefully building up to such an effect. For example, a dull domestic scene inside a house may finally be shattered by the blast of a train whistle which is louder than any train whistle ever was. But because the house scene has been deliberately played in a flat style, without interesting touches, the audience will take the giant whistle as something that might happen, as an inevitable dramatic moment. But the outsider, who thinks he has spotted some way in which the dull scene could be intensified, is confirmed in his belief that he could find wings as a director.

The Hungarian film critic, A. Kraszna-Krausz, reminded me that control of the mood of the scene implies that the director has the ability to see the pattern of the unmade film as a whole. There are brilliant technicians, men with a sense of the dramatic, who have failed as directors because they lack this gift of visualising in time. They fall in love with a particular sequence of their film, and they let an incident grow. They elaborate the part—and they lose the whole.

It was Brian Desmond Hurst who reminded me recently that when it comes to the control of the mood of the film, the director should know almost as much, as basic qualification, about music as about cutting and editing. Critics, who are always ready to protest when they hear of a director who does not bother about the editing of his film, never seem to trouble to find out whether the director has controlled the music for his film. They would if they had not lost touch with the director's basic problems in controlling mood, and then they would have a new set of references for their criticism.

Let us try, then, to remember these basic facts when we lay down rules for the æsthetic qualifications of a film director.

HOLLYWOOD MUSIC

By

ANTHONY THOMAS

A GREAT DEAL OF PRAISE and many emoluments have been bestowed upon the musicians of the British film industry in the last few years, and although it has been justified and deserving, the attention paid to British film music has, rather unequivocally, overshadowed the same field in Hollywood pictures.

It would be well to remember that the recent improvements in the background music of our films *are* recent and in keeping with the "new lease of life" that our industry took on during the war. Before the war, except for singularities such as Arthur Bliss' "Things to Come" music, the music in British films was hardly worthy of consideration. Whereas in Hollywood, pioneer musicians were trying to cultivate the field of music almost as soon as the talkies came into being. Although music in Hollywood pictures before the war had little more to distinguish it than it had in our films, there were more auspicious instances of its presence and development. The afore-

mentioned pioneers of film-music were battling away to improve their art. Representatives of these are men such as Leo. B. Forbstein, Max Steiner, Erich Wolfgang Korngold, Franz Waxman, Alfred Newman, Victor Young, Adolf Deutch, Robert Emmett Dolan, Herbert Stothart and quite a few more.

The score of music for *Duel in the Sun* by Dimitri Tiomkin is a good example of American film music. What faults it may have are those of the film itself. Conducting an orchestra of ninety musicians and employing technically faultless methods of sound recording and orchestration, Tiomkin composed a score at once virile, impressive and forceful.

The film *Spellbound* brought to the ears of many a beautiful score of music that won its composer, Miklos Rosza, the academy award for film music in 1945, and public demand that the music be popularly recorded as a concerto.

Again, in *Lost Week-end*, the unique music managed to project every queuing, horror-filled moment endured by the dipsomaniac. Weird in its haunting theme, the discordant melody was almost psychological in purveying the feeling of the film and in its effect on the observer.

A bar of music—and a mood is conveyed to the audience. A type of music essentially its own; the best screen music is almost classical in composition, and has finally begun to gain the recognition it rightfully deserves. Some of the melodies heard in the various pictures manage to escape from the background and tend to become popular; in these cases, it is always public demand that causes the melody to be detached from the whole and written into popular publications. Such a song was "Laura", by David Ruskin; originally mood-music, the public demanded that lyrics be added. Of the many instances of Max Steiner's music being demanded for public consumption, perhaps "Can It be Wrong" from *Now Voyager* is the best known. Whether this policy of popularising film music is commendable or not is a matter for conjecture, but it does prove one thing—that the music is begetting interest and attention.

It is safe to say that no American film company has done more to enhance the quality of film music than Warner Bros. While it is not the intention of this article to praise Warner Bros. as a company, in all fairness it must be recognised that they have always been among the first to evoke innovations and improvements in technical aspects of the industry, particularly sound and music. The music department of Warner Bros. is noticeably strong in having the already-mentioned Forbstein, Korngold, Waxman and Steiner among its members. While it might prove uninteresting to survey and record the entire field of Hollywood film music and musicians, a little dissertation upon these four men may be taken as epitomizing and recognising the whole.

Head of the Warner Bros. music department, Leo B. Forbstein, is one of the best known picture scorers in the world and has followed the development of the film music from its beginning. In 1929, already a well-known orchestra conductor, Forbstein became attached to the Vitaphone Company as a composer in the new field of film music and has been with Warner Bros. ever since. Some of his best known scores were those for Douglas Fairbanks, Senior's, and Mary Pickford's pictures. Those were scores for silent films; among his early scorings for talkies were *42nd Street*, *Voltaire* and *Gold Diggers of 1933*. In recent years, Forbstein's activities have been in directing the music department rather than in actual composing.

One of the most respected among Hollywood composers is fifty-year-old Erich Wolfgang Korngold, who was a child prodigy of Austria-Moravia and one of that country's most eminent composers. Possibly the only musician in films who is listed in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Korngold has done much to develop the screen as a medium for music. He was introduced to Hollywood in 1935 by the late impresario, Max Reinhardt, when he was engaged to write the music for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Korngold chose to remain in Hollywood and has during the last twelve years written music for fifteen of Warner Bros. most ambitious productions, including *Anthony*

Adverse, *The Adventures of Robin Hood*, *The Private Lives of Elizabeth and Essex*, *King's Row*, *The Sea Hawk*, *Devotion* and *Of Human Bondage*. Twice winner of the academy award, his work has won him an extremely high place among the roster of Hollywood's finest composers.

Franz Waxman has received much praise recently for his work on *Humoresque*. Although he composed very little music for the picture he was responsible for conducting and interpreting the superb music. Born in Germany in 1906, Waxman went to the United States in 1934. He was head of the music department at Universal for a year and a musical director and conductor at M.G.M. for seven years. In October, 1942, he joined Warner Bros., and has since composed music for some of their biggest productions, *In Our Time*, *Edge of Darkness*, *Destination Tokyo* and *Nora Prentiss*. Waxman is particularly proud of his music for *Rebecca*, parts of which have been played as a symphonic suite.

Lastly, there is that facile and prolific composer, Max Steiner, who is probably the most well known of all screen musicians. Born in Vienna, he studied under some of the greatest continental musicians and was a student of the Imperial Academy. At 14, Steiner wrote his first operetta, "Beautiful Greek Girl", which was produced and ran for a year at the Orpheum Theatre in Vienna, with Steiner conducting. In 1904, Steiner came to England and conducted at Daly's, the Adelphi, the Hippodrome, the London Opera House, the London Pavilion and the Blackpool Winter Garden. Ten years later he went to America and followed a career of conducting, orchestrating and composing for musical comedies, revues and comic operas. In 1929, he went to Hollywood as General Musical Director for RKO Radio Pictures. While there, he won his first academy award for *The Informer*. From RKO he went to Selznick International and later, in 1936, he went to Warner Bros. where he has been ever since. His first picture with Warners was *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, and he has written music for literally dozens of Warner productions. In 1942, he won his second academy award for *Now Voyager*, and two years later his third for *Since You Went Away*, the latter being a Selznick picture, Selznick having on several occasions enticed Steiner to write music for his productions, a case in point being *Gone With the Wind*. Steiner's "Symphonie Moderne" is an adaptation of his music for *Four Wives* and has been recorded by His Master's Voice.

Steiner must be one of the most decorated musicians in the world. He has been decorated by the French Government with the award of Officier de l'Academie Francaise, by the King of Belgium with a bronze medal at the Cinema Exhibition in Brussels in 1936 and the Mussolini Medal by the World Cinema Congress in Venice.

This, then, has been an appreciation, in part, of Hollywood music. There can be no comparison between the respective merits and shortcomings of the American film music and the British, that is, there should be none. It is difficult to draw a line between what is American and what is Hollywood; what is British and what is Denham. In both cases, a large number of the musicians are not native and there is no reason why they should be. Art and talent does not recognise nationality and politics.

JEWELLERY AND THE PERIOD FILM

By

M. D. S. LEWIS, A.R.C.S., B.Sc.

*Fellow Gemmological Association, Certified Gemmologist
(Gemmological Institute of America)*

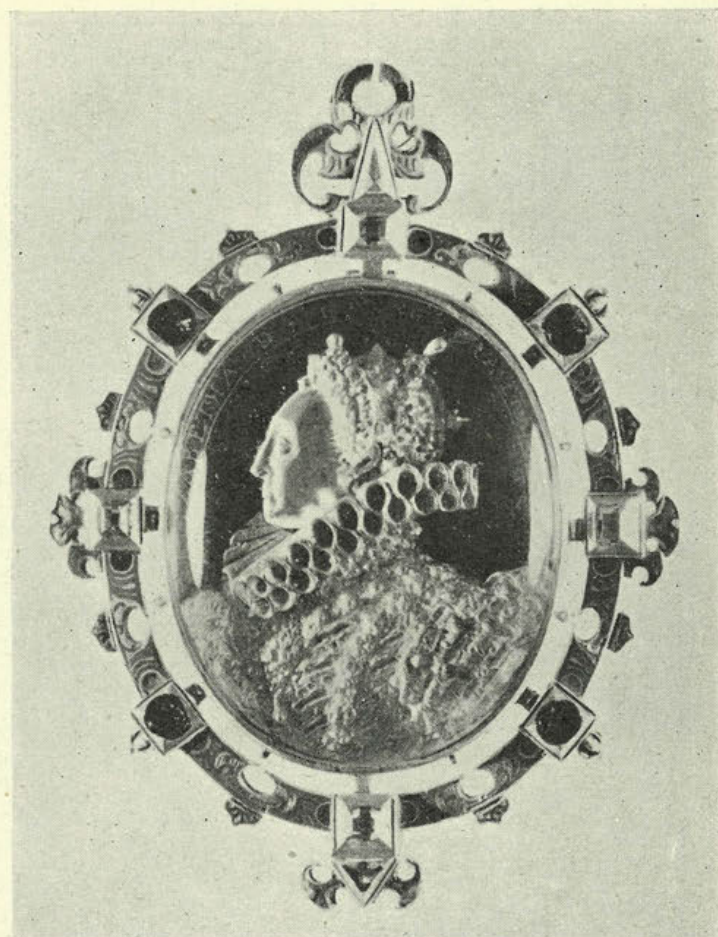
IT HAS BEEN SAID that jewellery reflects the tastes and degree of civilisation of a community, but it is permissible to go further than this; the hopes, fears, beliefs and often the actual needs of an age are as faithfully mirrored in an article of jewellery as in the houses, furniture or clothing of that day. The scarab—emblem of immortality—so frequently found in Egyptian rings was an expression of strong belief in an after life. The 15th century reliquaries—hollow pendants containing some saintly relic—were the outcome of the religious superstitions and mysticism of the middle ages. The pomanders—little jewelled perforated receptacles to hold sweet smelling spices—were produced to protect their wearers from the insanitary smells of the growing cities of mediæval Europe. The secret miniature rings of 17th century England, opening to reveal a portrait of Charles I, bear silent witness to the affection, fearfully concealed, of those who mourned the “martyr King”.

It is the purpose of this article briefly to describe the types of jewellery worn in the more romantic periods of history and to indicate the best methods of obtaining suitable specimens or reproductions for the studio.

The first chapter in the history of jewellery (as we know it) opened in Egypt. In life and in death jewellery entered largely into ancient Egyptian ornament, particularly in connection with elaborate funerary rites. Reproductions of typical Egyptian jewellery can be made by mounting scarabs in metal work, using as motifs the lotus flower, hawk, cobra and other emblems of Egyptian mythology.

Greek civilisation, which followed, set a standard by which the goldsmiths' work was to be judged many centuries later. The cameo and intaglio reached their positions as works of art and rings attained great importance, many being worn on each hand, frequently for the purpose of denoting rank. The Greeks were the first to develop earrings on a large scale.

Roman jewellery is clearly descended from that of the Greeks and the influence of Imperial Rome, extending as far north as Hadrian's Wall in England, brought Roman ideas to most parts of Europe including our own, where

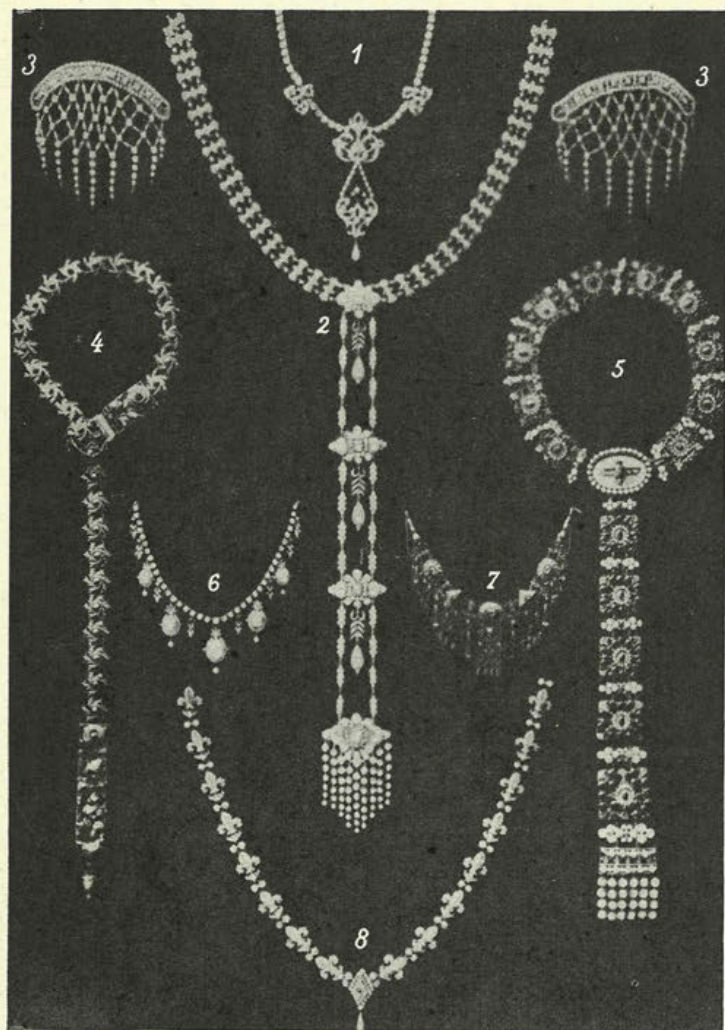


The Armada Jewel from the Pierpont Morgan Collection in the Victoria and Albert Museum

(See page 101)

for the first four hundred years of the present era they were accepted without question by the inhabitants. With the collapse of the Roman Empire before the barbarian invaders, classic design vanished from jewellery, not to be revived until 1,000 years later by the goldsmiths of the Renaissance. The introduction of Christianity towards the end of the 6th century imparted a religious character to jewellery, a process due in part to the fact that many of the priests of the early English Christian Church were also goldsmiths.

By the end of the 14th century nearly all forms of jewellery had been brought into use, but although in many periods design had passed through phases of great artistry allied with immense technical ability, the resulting products bore little resemblance to our modern conceptions of personal ornament. The sack-like clothing, poor illumination of dwellings, constant fear of war, superstition and persecution all combined to make jewellery either strictly utilitarian or predominantly religious in character. Emphasis was always on metal work, often extensively enamelled, set perhaps with a few gemstones crudely cut and at comparatively wide intervals. All stones were closed in at the back and nearly always displayed curved upper surfaces.



Some accurate period reconstructions

Naturally, few of these early pieces remain intact, the majority being in museums or in the hands of private collectors and it must be confessed that modern tastes give little encouragement to manufacturers to reproduce jewellery in this style on a commercial scale. To attain tolerable historical accuracy in a film of this period, it would probably be necessary to have the jewellery specially made, but this should not present much difficulty to a jewellery workshop not given over to mass production methods and with a feeling for the antique.

In Italy the first half of the 15th century ushered in the most remarkable period in the history of jewellery. The dark days of the earlier Middle Ages now gave way to the gaiety and splendour of the Renaissance. The newly-found rich fabrics, love of colour and intense joy of life all combined to provide a suitable background for the magnificent jewels which were shortly to follow. Led by the famous Florentine goldsmith, Benvenuto Cellini—amorous, vain, boastful, quarrelsome, but always outstanding artist and typical child of his time—the Italian jewellers, followed later by those of Germany and Spain, produced the wonderful ornaments of the Renaissance. Exquisitely enamelled, set with coloured gemstones and table diamonds (cut with only five facets), these jewels are the envy and

pride of connoisseurs. Brilliant colouring, minute attention to detail, lavish use of pearls, perfection of finish both back and front, are characteristic features, combined with naturalistic designs of human and animal forms. Ships and fabulous sea figures were also favourite subjects. Jewellery—ever sensitive to changes of environment—had now developed into an article of pure adornment and the diamond had entered into jewellery design. It must be noted, however, that Renaissance jewellery still made but sparing use of diamonds, their role being merely to provide artistic contrast to the riot of colour which was the outstanding feature.

AGE OF LUXURY

The full tide of the Renaissance did not reach England until Elizabeth's reign. By this time her maritime supremacy, growing wealth and contacts with other lands had set the stage for an influx of jewels on a large scale. It was an age of luxury and new forms of jewellery such as jewelled fan handles and portable watches made their appearance. Queen Elizabeth, fully inheriting the Tudor love of display, was passionately fond of jewellery. A description of her given in 1598 reads—"The Queen had in her ears two pearls with very rich drops, she wore false hair and that red, upon her head she had a small crown, her bosom was uncovered and she had on a necklace of exceedingly fine jewels. She was dressed in white silk, bordered with pearls of the size of beans and over it a mantle of black silk shot with silver threads, her train was very long. Instead of a chain she had an oblong collar of gold and jewels". A number of noble jewels have survived from Queen Elizabeth's reign, rich in historical association and reflecting across the years the glitter and magnificence of this splendid period of English history.

Owing to their high artistic merit and immense value Renaissance jewels have been extensively reproduced and before the war a flood of this type of jewellery—produced in Hungary—poured into this country. Large quantities still exist and in most cases a film of Renaissance times could be satisfactorily catered for. Generally speaking jewellery for films of this and earlier periods should not contain diamonds or stones simulating them as, if not correctly cut, they would—by excessive reflection—produce an unsuitable glitter.

THE RISE OF THE DIAMOND

With the opening of the fabulous Indian diamond fields at Golconda, Renaissance styles gradually gave way before a new development in jewellery. Encouraged by Cardinal Mazarin—an enthusiastic admirer of diamonds—Dutch lapidaries discovered the art of "rose-cutting" (covering the surface with numerous small triangular facets giving much enhanced brilliancy) and diamonds rose to the popularity they have ever since maintained. Simultaneously, with the opening of the silk industry in Lyons, the heavy velvet and brocade textiles of the Renaissance were discarded in favour of lace, damask and ribbons. The effect on ornament was profound and jewellery tended to develop into floral openwork designs with lines and clusters of

glittering stones set closely together, the metal being relegated to an insignificant mechanical role.

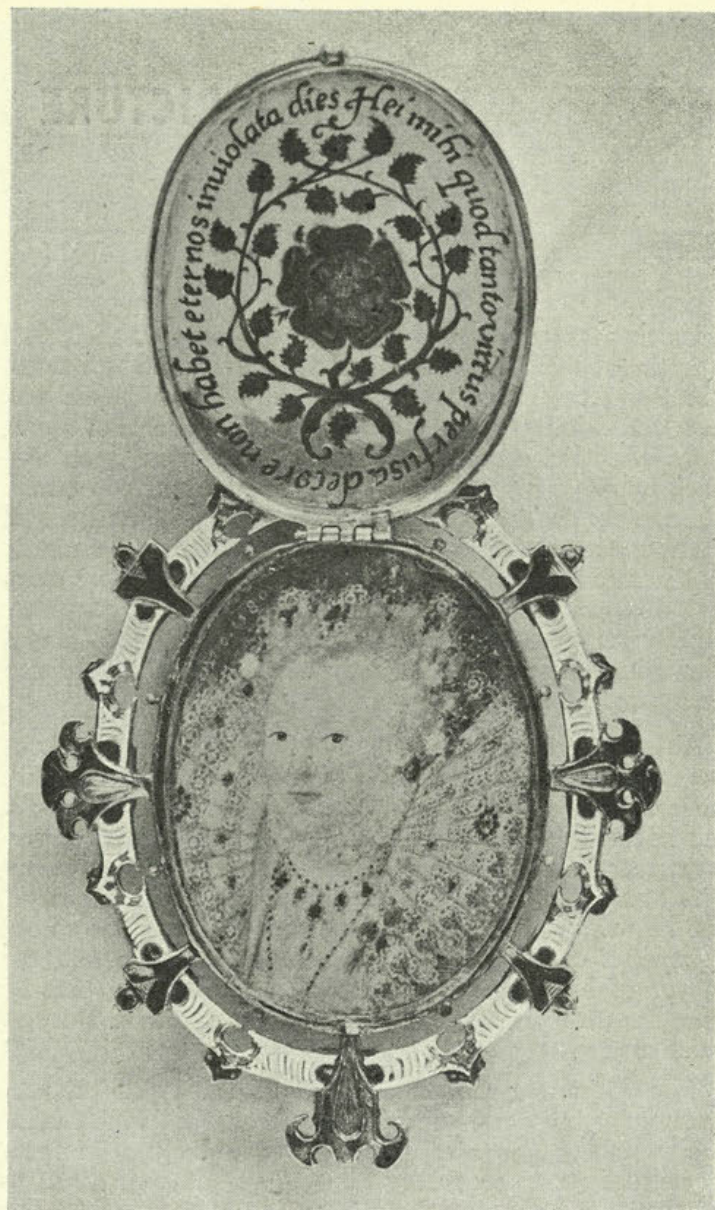
Miniature cases, locket, aigrettes, jewelled girdles and watches were characteristic 17th century jewels. Towards the middle of the century the fashion of wearing seals and intaglios became very popular among both men and women. Seventeenth century jewellery is very rare and on the whole difficult to reproduce, and the provision of accurate models for a film would be no easy matter.

The early 18th century was the age of "rococo" and the predominantly floral designs of the 17th century were succeeded by florid but attractive strap, scroll and feather motifs. This lasted until about 1750, when the discovery of the ruins of Pompeii re-kindled an interest in classic art. Both Madame Pompadour and Madame du Barry—famous mistresses of Louis XV—exerted strong influence on jewellery fashions, the former leading the way from "rococo" to classicism and the latter through her beautiful "girandole" earrings. This pattern consists of a large sapphire above a floral design of silver and diamonds from which are suspended three sapphire drops. These exceedingly graceful earrings, and other ornaments in similar style; were reproduced by an English workshop in the last few years. Perhaps the most characteristic 18th century ornaments were paste shoe buckles and chatelaines and etuis in pinchbeck. Much inexpensive authentic 18th century jewellery survives and, owing to its high artistic merit, there are numerous reproductions in existence and the provision of suitable pieces for the studio should not be difficult.

Nineteenth century jewellery is, of course, comparatively easy to obtain and mention must be made of the highly decorative and artistic, yet at the same time characteristically English, jewellery of garnet and gold and turquoise and gold.

Finally, a word about men's jewellery, which from earliest times until the 18th century had been extensively made and worn. The Tudor and Stuart kings loaded themselves with jewels. Henry VIII is described as wearing gold and enamel tags on his velvet cap, a gold collar bearing a diamond as large as a walnut together with an enormous pearl. Large gold acorns hung from his belt and another gold collar on his coat bore a diamond pendant of St. George. On his fingers were masses of rings. Men freely indulged in the fashion of wearing one earring. As late as 1730 the elegant Beau Nash was seen in Bath wearing high-heeled pumps with huge buckles "glimmering with a hundred twinkling lights". Towards the end of the 18th century these picturesque accessories of men's attire were gradually discarded under the impact of ideas which led to the French revolution.

Jewellery enters the period film in three different ways. It may be called on to fulfil its age old function of drawing attention to parts of the human body. Together with architecture, furniture and clothing, it should be used to convey a correct historical background. Just as design was always closely related to the conditions of life at the period that gave it birth, so should it in turn re-create these factors to give the necessary perspective. It may also go further because jewellery, perhaps more than any other article, has often been closely associated with dramatic events of history. The pearl removed by Charles I from his ear and given to



The Armada Jewel

Above: The back opens to reveal a portrait of the Queen by the great English miniaturist, Hilliard. The interior of the lid is decorated in enamel by the Tudor rose and an extravagantly worded Latin inscription reading: "Alas! that virtue endued with so much beauty should not uninjured enjoy perpetual life".

Probably presented to Queen Elizabeth by an admirer and later given by her to Sir Thomas Heneage, her favourite Chancellor, on the defeat of the Spanish Armada.

Photos reproduced by kind permission of the Victoria and Albert Museum. (Crown copyright reserved).

a faithful adherent as he faced his last moments on the scaffold, the Armada jewels made to celebrate Drake's victory over the Spanish fleet, the 1,000 year old Alfred jewel, believed to have fallen from King Alfred's crown in Somerset, whence he had fled from the Danes, are but few examples of those which are sharply silhouetted against the background of history.

THE FIRST PICTURE HOUSE IN THE WORLD

By

JOHN HUNTLEY

In the middle of the town the trams clattered their way over the cobbled, congested roadways around the market place, and the progress by car from the city centre was slow and winding. The view however became more and more consistent—row upon row of blackened stone and brick houses with front door step and parlour combined. Women sat on the porch steps and surveyed the lines of washing stretched across the streets supported in the middle by battered wooden poles. A number of people wore clogs and the monotony of the 19th Century slums was only slightly relieved by the 19th Century mills. This was a Lancashire cotton town; it might have been any of a dozen places, actually it was Blackburn.

About half a mile from the market place, at the top of one of the streets was the 'first picture house in the world'. At least, that's what the advert in the local paper said; it was not possible to confirm or deny the claim. There was some rather nebulous evidence about the previous owner who had said that he was the first real cinema proprietor but he was dead and has left no proof. There was an old newspaper cutting about a Mayor of Bath who told the Mayor of New Orleans in a lecture in America that he *knew* the Blackburn cinema was the world's oldest. But not much else.

The Alexander Cinema, Blackburn, is a red bricked, rectangular building, with cobbled streets in front, a canal behind and the smell of industry all round. Built in 1906, it was designed specifically for the screening of films; in this it claims to be first. Up to then it had been a matter of barns, town halls and converted shop-fronts. Today, an inscription in white letters on a blue tin sheet reads: "Real Animated Pictures. Nightly at Eight". On entering the hall, the fruity North country voice of the manager is pleasing and in character; there is no foyer, a little hutch below the screen for an office, and prices are 7d. and 10d. with matinees at 3d. and 5d. Not bad these days. Inside, the empty seats stretch back to the point where a flight of steps leads to the balcony; some of the seats are wooden. The man who is rash enough to spend 10d. on his film entertainment progresses regally through the hall and up the stairs to the circle; some customers have been known to object at this conspicuous ascent to the accompaniment of comments from the 7d's.

"At most cinemas", said the manager from his badly-slashed seat in the stalls, "you need an attendant to take the tickets as the people come in. Here, you need one to take the tickets and bash a few of 'em to keep 'em quiet. And as for seat damage. One night after the show I thought I noticed a funny smell after the mob had gone. We found some kids had pulled all the stuffing out of a seat and started a bonfire inside the seat itself. Take the W.C.'s. They pulled the seats off and slung them in the canal; we had a special sunken light in the roof but they had it out

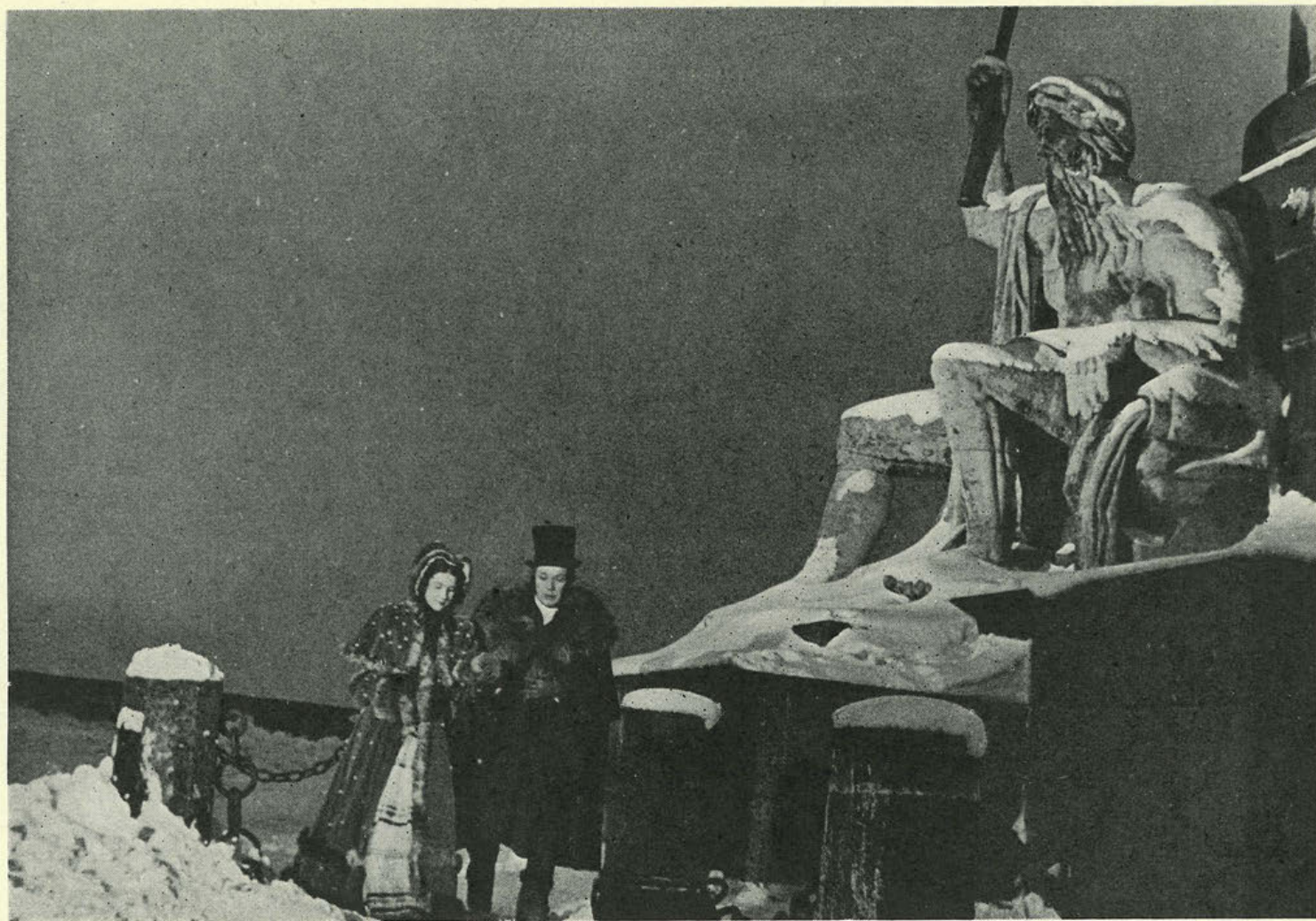
and into the canal. Then they got really rough and pulled the plumbing off the walls; into the water it went. So we put a special wire cage outside the window to collect the chunks of the cinema as they were chucked out but they pulled the cage down and that went in as well".

The manager of the "first cinema in the world" is not discouraged by these events; he has a stubborn philosophy on life and takes it all as part of the game. "The kids these days can't spend their money on sweets and buns so a chap round the corner started doing a roaring trade in jack knives. We've taken hundreds of them off the nippers; if we hadn't, there wouldn't be a seat left in the place. In fact we're thinking of going into partnership; he sells the knives, we pinch 'em off the kids and sell them back to the shop!"

The projection room is of solid stone and shows the minimum space into which two rather battered but quite serviceable Kalee 8's can be fitted. The sound system consists of an Imperial amplifier and head, with an ordinary Philips Public Address amplifier used as a stand-by. On the wall an old pendulum clock ticks away serenely. The throw is about 75 feet from the back of the stalls and the projectors have a slight upward tilt to negotiate the heads of the audience at the back. The hands of the audience are not so easily reckoned with and during the performance, silhouettes of rabbits, outlines of sticky hands holding lollipops and frequent "V" signs are inserted into the duller moments of the feature. The audience is keen to express opinions on the quality of the entertainment and the manager will tell you that he has some shrewd and discerning critics amongst his patrons. "Why, only the other day, one of my regulars looked down into my office as he was going and yelled "Joe! Where the bloody hell did you dig that one up!"

What sort of films do they like? "Plenty of action is the thing here; they are also very partial to a bit of religious background. Not religion films, of course, but a touch of the old village church or Bing as a priest does the trick. They like British films more than they did; we could have run *The Wicked Lady* for a month. Frank Randle is a wow round these parts, too." The manager books the films himself as do the nine other independent cinemas in Blackburn. The audience doesn't seem very different from that of 1906 really; still the same Westerns, the cartoons, the love stuff, the noise of the children. As we sat there in the evening, fish-and-chips hot in hand, dialogue inaudible due to the shouts from below, flickering image on the screen, it seemed that things don't change quite as quickly as we sometimes imagine.

"The first cinema in the world"? Well, maybe it is and maybe it isn't; we didn't find out for sure. Somehow the things of yesterday got rather swamped out by a new understanding of the things that still make up today.



Glinka

A New Russian Film

“PURVEYORS OF SPIRITUAL POISON”

The following article by S. M. EISENSTEIN was written for “Culture in Life”, Moscow. We reprint it without comment

THE AMERICAN CINEMA has produced more than a few ultra-reactionary pictures in the past. We have only to remember a very early film, *Birth of a Nation*, which celebrated the formation of the Klu Klux Klan, a fascist organisation.

There have also been in the American cinema, however, quite a number of really vital themes treated in a convincing manner, although this was usually contrary to the intention of the makers of the film, and certainly against the wishes of their bosses. But in one way or another there have appeared from time to time on the American screen films giving with unexpected objectivity a true picture of the code of behaviour of the gentlemen of the “God’s own country”, as the Americans like to call their United States.

In the thirties there appeared a film, *The Big House* (the American name for prisons), giving an extraordinarily realistic picture of prison conditions and showing a revolt, and its suppression—with the use of tanks.

Later came a film *I Was a Fugitive from a Chain-gang*, a striking document revealing the injustice and obscurantism

of the American legal system, a sinister machine showing no mercy to those who fall into its clutches.

Films like *Grapes of Wrath* and *Tobacco Road* give a picture every bit as clear as the original novels of the ruthless exploitation of the unemployed and the full horror and dark abyss facing the ruined small farmers of the Southern states and reducing them to a subhuman condition.

Quite recently the cinemas of America were showing *Boomerang*, a film which reveals with full and accurate detail the backstage machinations pursued by small town politicians in the interests of their small caste, and leading to the passing of the death sentence on an entirely innocent man. The film gives a vivid picture of the methods of interrogation and extortion of confession. “The law forbids beating during interrogation” says one of the characters, “but the law says nothing about preventing a man from sleeping”, and this means is used to reduce a man to a state in which he is prepared to sign any confession.

Films of this kind, however, giving a more or less objective picture of the actual state of affairs are becoming

rarer and rarer. Their place is being taken by films of quite another type. The American cinema is no longer what it was twenty years ago.

The time has passed when we could merely shrug our shoulders and smile at the empty, irrelevant entertainment provided by American films; or admire, somewhat condescendingly, the exploits of Robin Hood or *The Thief of Baghdad*, or the athletic prowess of Pearl White or Ruffy Rollan.

CLOUDS OVER CHAPLIN

The wave of reaction is pressing more and more heavily on the entire life of the country, and its art as well. At the present time the disciples of the Klu Klax Klan are drawing up black lists of all those who, during the war, dared to use the American cinema to address humanity on vital questions. The people on this list will be condemned to unemployment and starvation. Already the black clouds are gathering threateningly over Charlie Chaplin. There are already instances of anti-fascist actors being subjected to merciless baiting; and American films show more and more clearly how progressive elements are being swamped by the wave of reaction and themselves often contain praise of that same fatal reaction. Even "non-political" American films propagate the poison in subtle form. It is not only those films openly devoted to erotic themes or to the praise of power in the person of gangsters or bandits that have a disintegrating effect.

Whatever hypocritical pretences these films make of exposing gangsters the fact remains that they are a panegyric of the gangsters' shameless methods, persistence in the pursuit of their own selfish interests and utter disregard of everything beyond these interests.

What else can we expect from the producers of these films? After all, this code of morals, based on plunder and violence, is also the code of the "honest" businessmen, although they sit in the soft armchairs of the directors of firms and companies instead of sitting, like ordinary criminals, in the electric chair.

Even more harmful sometimes are films which are not so obvious in their praise of the basest and the most animal instincts of men. The spectator is more strongly affected by a film where the poison is wrapped up in warm humanity, soft humour and touching pathos.

There are also such "enchanted" films as *Going My Way*, with a well-known American actor, Bing Crosby, which was awarded a prize and advertised all over Europe. Here the nets for the spectators' hearts are so musical and laid so cunningly (it is not for nothing that the hero of the film is an unusually cunning snarer of human souls—a young priest) that it is only after the end of the film that the spectator realises how shamefully he has been participating in the action during the two hours while it has been shown.

This film cleverly combines humour, a patriotic theme, lyricism and religious singing for the purpose of slurring over the real cause and the tragedy of prostitution and asserting that child delinquency is best dealt with not by changing the social conditions driving the children to crime, but by collective singing in a church.

And the film as a whole serves as an apologia for the owner of a block of cheap flats, making him out to be a

benefactor, though this is in fact one of the most repulsive forms of exploitation of the poor classes in America.

Or there are such "enchanted" films as *Anna and the King of Siam* singing unqualified praise of the superiority of the white races over the Siamese semi-apes and of the missionary role played by an American governess who set out to win the savages over to the biblical virtues of humility and love. The action takes place in the sixties of the last century when the Siamese were concentrating all their efforts on asserting their independence against the attempts of England and France to seize Siam in their colonising claws. There is no mention of all this; instead we see a light ironical sometimes moving picture, often dramatic, always witty and apparently quite innocent. But it would be difficult to find more subtle propaganda of the colonial politics which make the average American either indifferent or sympathetic to disgraceful acts now being committed in places so far from Siam as Indonesia, in the lawless realm of Field-Marshal Smuts—the Union of South Africa—and the "independent" Philippines.

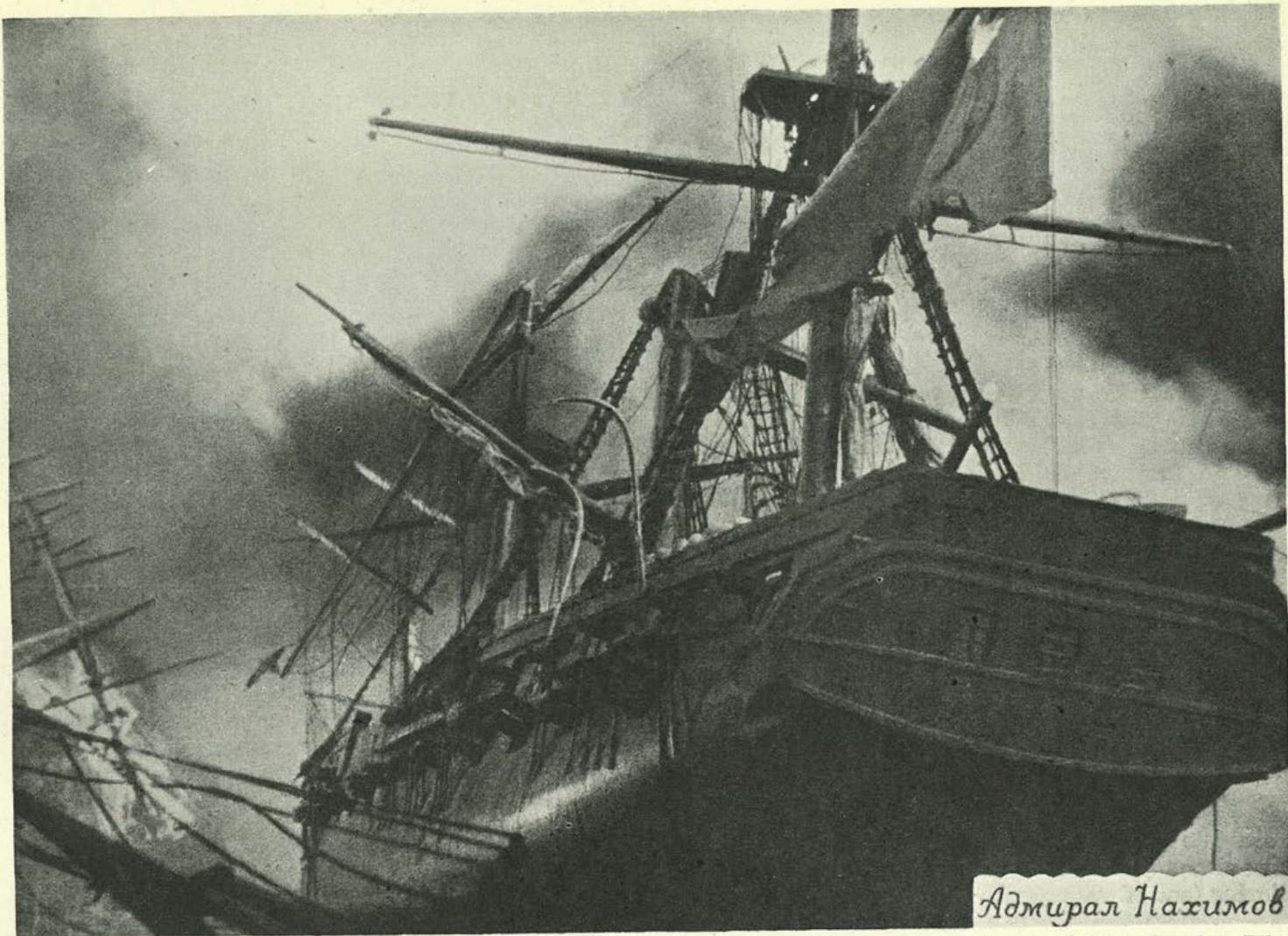
The makers of films are particularly cunning when it comes to dealing with the problem of the relations between employers and employees, whether it be a factory owner and the workers, or a big landowner and his tenants. Films showing clashes between labour and capital now appear fairly frequently on the American screen: reality is too full of these problems and interest in them is morbidly keen. And the American cinema loses no opportunity of expressing an opinion on all questions which interest, trouble or excite the spectator. The spectator is worried over problems of social injustice? All right, here we have this little theme, adapted and effectively treated. The magic hand of the film director makes it harmless whilst preserving the external drama.

The methods of treatment are many and various. As an example let us take an average horror film, *Dragonwyck*, a film about a crime punishable by death. The slightly unbalanced owner of the castle "Dragonwyck", using a magnolia bush, slowly poisons his wives one after another because they are unable to give him the heir he desires. A considerable part of the film, however, is devoted to showing the differences between the owner of vast lands and the semi-beggared tenants working for him.

The film is interesting because of the topicality of the theme. But how to avoid coming up against the sacred principle of the right to possession of vast areas of land? The answer is very simple. The crime of the owner of the castle attains such monstrous proportions that the typical is lost sight of in the exaggeration of the individual case. The film shows not the evil of the system, but the evil of the individual representative of the system. As a result, the spectator's anger is roused by the act of a rare screen criminal, and not by the sight of the evil of the system, one completely putting the other out of mind.

And no one notices that a clever substitution has been made before his eyes: the screen criminal heroically takes the bullet that should have been aimed at the system.

And at the end of the film the criminal too is absolved of his sins—posthumously. For this purpose he is declared mad which makes it possible to excuse the dastardliness of his crimes and to exaggerate them to a point impossible in real life, thus dissociating them from the actual social system.



Admiral Nakhimov

Адмирал Нахимов

A New Russian Film

The wolves have eaten their fill, but the sheep are still alive; the spectator has been thrilled by a film on a dangerous contemporary theme. The film earned money. Crime has been shown in the most vivid colour. Crime has been punished. The basic principle has not been shaken. And the evil doings of which the criminal is "medically" innocent are expiated by allowing the victim to shoot the criminal.

The ability to take any theme, even one which in view of conditions in America would appear most slippery and dangerous; not to avoid such a theme but to retain its outward form and by means of exaggeration (or some other means) to reduce it—slowly and smoothly to self-destruction and final nothingness—this is probably one of the most cunning characteristics of the American cinema.

Films of this type give rise to a cynical inhuman attitude to reality. The men behind the Hollywood businessmen aim to deprive the average American of all feelings of honour, to make him cynical and egoistical. This is necessary lest he protest against the violation of laws and justice occurring daily, hourly in America. It is necessary lest there well up in his heart indignation against the betrayal of those who shed their blood in the battle of Stalingrad, on the vast fronts of the Soviet Union where the fate of mankind was decided. At that time the papers, the radio and books all spoke about the Russians as valiant allies. Now all the filthy, dirty, dark elements have come to the surface, so

that the muddy water obscures the thought of everything fine, pure and progressive.

The American cinema is well equipped with the latest filming and projecting apparatus, uses all the latest production technique. On the sets of Hollywood, towns, forests, or Egyptian scenes can be built in an instant. But this technically advanced cinema is used in the service of ideas only slightly in advance of the stone age. The statue of Liberty at the entry to New York port has long ceased to be a symbol of liberty even for the United States. In "democratic" America the cinema has become one of the weapons in the fight against freedom and democracy. How far behind us "advanced" America is lagging! As regards social problems, America belongs not even to the 19th century, but rather to the period of the Middle Ages and the crusades, whose bonfires twinkle so familiarly at the bonfires of the lynch courts, fed with high-quality petrol.

The skill, inventiveness and technical mastery of the American cinema are used in the service of darkness and oppression—fundamental characteristic features of the cruelty and unjust system of imperialistic society.

American films contribute actively to the consolidation of this society by imposing ideas upon the people.

Thus the most vital of the arts—the cinema—is playing the most deadly and destructive role.

When we think of this, it makes us appreciate even more our young, healthy growing art—a vital, national art.

ONE THING AFTER ANOTHER

Being a discourse on Serials

By

J. C. TREWIN

IF I REMEMBER RIGHTLY (for it is a long time ago, and memory is not what it was) I left her hanging by one hand—hardly a hand but two or three fingers—to a tenuous tuft of grass. Far below, the sea pounded silently on the cliffs—for the length of the drop see Edgar's speech in *King Lear*—and at any moment, I gathered, the Girl would relax her hold. How she got there, placed neatly in the dead centre of the screen, I cannot for the moment recall. At first I thought she was the girl in the opium-den, but that busy young woman had been saved already (from the appropriate fate) by a detective-inspector who streaked down the Thames in a fast motor-launch, whipping through the Pool at a rate of knots. No doubt you remember him: he was the man who, in Reel Three, climbed the Nelson Column with an alpenstock. On this occasion he had thrust aside the bead curtains, tossed a guard over his shoulder, and extinguished the flaming brazier before you could say "Fu-Manchu".

It was rich work, a sound bit of brawling. . . . But I stray from the Girl on the cliff. You will have guessed that I could do nothing for her because she was in a film. She must always have been in my film. Certainly a newspaper clipping (one of two veterans which I found in my drawer this morning) tells me that she belonged to the eighth instalment of *Your Favourite Serial*, showing at 2.15, 4.45, and 8.30. I do not know the title of my favourite serial. The entire space, a three-inch single if you must be technical about it, is given to the big picture, which *was* a big picture indeed, no less than *The Glorious Adventure* in full colour. Mnemosyne can be perverse. Here, while showing no flicker of interest in the probably startling colour-schemes of a historic film, she will recreate vividly the tuft, the Girl, the grey vastness beyond, the cliff's sliding shale, and the perpetual fine "rain" of the old silent serials.

THE GIRL

Are there such things as serials now? Somehow I hardly imagine so, but then I am not the ardent film-goer I should be. *Great Expectations*, yes—I have never seen a finer blaze than the affair at Miss Havisham's—and, since you press me, *Forty-Ninth Parallel*, *Henry the Fifth*, and a powerful piece with George Formby and a ukelele. Still, I have a past. I was brought up with *Intolerance*, and *Shoulder Arms*, and the one with the ice-floes in it, and that other one about the Civil War (theirs, not ours). Nobody can say that I have not given the cinema a square deal.

Consider this matter of serials. In my youth I swallowed as many serials, or instalments thereof, as I could get, and though—for various reasons—I never seemed to reach the

end of them, the pieces that I did see still whisk around my bed in the night, like Richard's vision before Bosworth. The Girl is always there. She may not be the same Girl: she may be a platoon, a regiment, a whole dream of fair women. No matter: for me she is always the same, whether she is being stifled in a cellar, battened under hatches, flung from a cliff, tossed on a mustang, or pushed from a skyscraper. You had to be uncommonly tough to survive your serials in those days; but the Girl never blinked. Wherever she is in this autumn crisis, from whatever cliff she dangles, or to whatever railroad she is chained, I send to her—in a voice cracked, it is true, but with emotion only—a veteran's blessings and regards.

READ ON

Film-goers long past—men who fled the time carelessly in a golden world—were patient and uncomplaining. They did not insist on a neat parcel of plot, every string tied, every knot sealed. Not at all. They were perfectly content to have their excitement ribboned across a dozen weeks, a dozen palpitating Saturdays. To-day, I imagine, the Girl would have to get through her work in one session: in those lost years of spring and blossom she could be stretched on the rack through three drowsy months. Then, I admit, we had the serial mind. We were used to waiting, to the phrase "See next week's instalment" in small italic type on the last page of a flimsy weekly. And we were used to newspaper serials that began, as I recall, like this:

BEGIN HERE

MARCUS CARTWRIGHT, a gay and wealthy barrister, is running through Gray's Inn after a Turkish bath when he notices

FELICIA CHILVERS-CHILVERS, an unemployed blonde *disease*, hanging from a third-floor window. Scenting a mystery, Cartwright springs up a drainpipe to release the girl who, he discovers, has been drugged by

"MAD MAX" PIMENTO, head of the "Y" gang, and uncle of

HAROLD TARRAGON, Steward of the Chiltern Hundreds, who is engaged to Marcus's aunt, and who has, unknown to Felicia, stolen the Caliph's Ruby from the Royal Agricultural Hall. He is being pursued by

CHONG, Keeper of the Temple.

(Now Read On)

And joyfully, my friends, we did—day in, day out, month by month, year by year. We can rarely do that now. We did it then as a matter of course, and at the week-end we could always see another version of the same story at the Electric Cinedrome. As a rule the only variations were the precise site of the hanging—a good lighthouse had its points—and the name (not that this mattered greatly) of the principal pursuer. He might, as you will readily agree, have been Wu, Keeper of the Sanctuary, or even Poom, Warden of the Igloo. The main thing was that he pursued.

He kept to the trail. He knew his job. He had, so to speak, a knife between his teeth. No bungling here: at the foot of the column or the end of the reel there was the Girl, flying for her life towards the precipice, and there behind her was Chong (or Wu), as brisk and as fidgety as usual. And there, too, were we—readers or audience—comfortably spine-chilled, and with each particular hair on end.

The phrase, or something near it, brings me to the second exhibit from my drawer. It is a note, browned off now, from the same period (the early 'twenties, I should say), and copied from a film publicity sheet. It speaks kindly of a familiar stage play which it calls "*the stage version of the film*". That is a charming phrase, and one day (post-Olivier) it may be resurrected for *Hamlet*. In my time we should never have permitted a film *Hamlet* to keep the original title. It would have been called *The Orchard Murder*, the "Thriller with a Throb", and (I feel as I look lovingly back) the main scene would have brought the Girl, hanging as usual from the high eastward cliff. She would have been the same girl. But who, you ask with reason, would have been her pursuer? Hardly Wu or Chong or Poom. It is hard to say; yet I do know that we stuck at little in the grand old days when a serial was a serial and not a crackling breakfast-food. I am tempted, if you will permit me, to add a verse or two to Hardy's *An Ancient to Ancients*:

*The season's epics do not thrill,
Gentlemen,
As in the years before de Mille,
When serials witched the throbbing screen,
When Pearl White had the strength of ten
In battles aerial or marine,
Gentlemen.*

*No more she hovers on the edge,
Gentlemen,
Or outstretched on the mountain's ledge,
Waits for the looped lasso to hiss
About her neck, and then—ah! then—
To throw her headlong to th'abyss,
Gentlemen.*

*We who endured the knife, the cord,
Gentlemen,
Are growing old and stale and bored:
We miss the serial's swoop-and-whirl,
Delights that will not come agen,
And most of all we miss the Girl,
Gentlemen.*

RELIGIOUS RATIONS

By

ANDREW BUCHANAN

AS THERE'S ALWAYS such a demand for rationed goods, I often wonder whether religion would come to be regarded as essential if one had to give up a coupon on entering Church, and if prayers were put on points.

There are still a number of free and unrationed things which we're inclined to ignore just because they are free and unrationed. Very important things, too. If religion really does hold the answer to our present plight, why do we persist in trying to clear up the chaos without its aid? The man next door, and the woman opposite, are visibly wearing away because of increasing hardships, shortages, restrictions, and they feel powerless to improve conditions. Their lives are controlled by THEM, otherwise THEY. "THEY are going to reduce this, and prohibit that". THEY being any government, anywhere, and the only kind of power which millions recognise, and find it necessary to obey.

Is it not elementary that a civilization which recognises a material power as the supreme authority will perish?

World chaos is periodically punctuated by appeals for spiritual revivals. Voices are raised in west-endy wildernesses for a return to religion. Posters proclaim that only the spiritual factor can save us. But still we roll downhill, and queues for life's material necessities and pleasures grow longer and longer, but there are no queues for religion. Why?

First, because religion is invisible, and civilization has been taught that seeing is believing. Secondly, the Christian Churches are not united, and it must be exceedingly difficult for them to put the world in order when they haven't even succeeded in creating harmony amongst themselves. In the words of Swift, "We have just enough religion to make us hate, but not enough to make us love one another". Thirdly, there has been no evidence to prove that religion has any direct and vital bearing upon, and influence over, everyday life and its problems. Generally speaking, religion is enveloped in dignity and doctrine, and remains above our heads. In other words, religion is up against a world grown hard through ignoring it, but one can't blame the world, for it's composed of billions of extremely decent people, unlabelled Christians, who find it hard to place any faith in Churches which have carved up Christianity to suit their respective interpretations of it, and which seem to take their instructions from the material powers which dominate you and I. Besides, people haven't the time to probe about looking for spiritual solutions. When the woman opposite has finished queueing for food for the body she hasn't enough energy to start queueing for food for the soul, although she knows, in a vague sort of way, that something is missing in life; some power which should be able to guide her towards a happier and less wearying form of existence. She feels a desire to turn to religion, but if by chance she did stumble across it, she might be disappointed,

because in all probability it would lead her back to where she started, for it should be remembered that in some respects the Churches are groping, too.

All this suggests an urgent need to project spiritual truths to humanity as efficiently and as ceaselessly as the products of the material world are publicised by experts who can sell anything from permanent waves to almost equally permanent wars. Film is about the finest medium for the purpose, and so it is encouraging to know that a number of groups and individuals are today producing, in an attempt to overcome the grave shortage of films suitable for religious purposes, or, as I prefer to call them, films offering enlightenment on life's problems. But to eliminate entirely the shortage is impossible whilst the Churches work independently of each other.

Let us survey the present position. If one regards religion in its widest sense, there are, perhaps, four main classes of films contributing towards religious understanding.

1. *Religion in overalls.* Films in commercial cinemas, both features and shorts, which exert a good, sane influence without mentioning religion. There are a surprisingly large number of them. Maybe they show, in dramatic form, that crime does not pay, or in documentary form, that the commercial exploitation of the masses does pay—the exploiters. There's real religion in such films.

2. *Religion in evening clothes.* Films in commercial cinemas which are definitely about religion, symbolised by, say, *The Song of Bernadette*, and shaped to be money spinners. They bring visible evidence of religion to the screen, but it is not addressed to the individual, and rarely penetrates to one's inner self. Films in this group should be welcomed, for they do more good than harm.

3. *Religion on a blackboard.* Films made for non-theatrical purposes, of an educational nature. Usually short, they provide a background for a study of religion, but they do not reach the majority, and if they did, there wouldn't be a spiritual revolution.

4. *Religion in a Sunday suit.* Religious films in the accepted sense of the word, mostly Biblical stories, and quite unsuitable for commercial release. Expensively made, technically excellent, they are, in my opinion, a complete waste of time and money under present circumstances. They merely widen the gulf between religion and reality. The hysterical present is unlikely to be influenced by the historical past. In a nice, enlightened civilization, such films would provide a pleasant means of ensuring that all the nice people would go on being nice, but in a savage age, when it often seems that the only white people left are the black ones who have managed to avoid contact with civilizing influences, then any films which do not project religion as a living force today, which holds the answer to world distress, are not worth bothering about.

It would appear, therefore, that a fifth class is wanted, to explain the true meaning of religion, and so remove doubt, apathy, and confusion. But something has got to happen inside the Churches before such films can be made. They have got to become one. There is sufficient agreement between all the Churches on so large an area of doctrine that they can well combine for the special purpose of establishing religious film production of a kind which will be capable of fully representing Christianity. Their points of difference can go on being points of difference. Millions won't know, and if they do, they won't care. A united

Christian film front is the first essential, from which should flow films from A CHRISTIAN CHURCH, instead of spasmodic trickles from unrelated Churches which tend to cancel each other out, or to overlap.

I have been working with the Church of England, the Free Churches and the Catholic Church, simultaneously, and experience has taught me that unified action is perfectly possible. As it also happens to be essential, the sooner the wheels begin to turn the better, for there isn't much time left.

A COMMON HUMANITY

Some while ago the Catholic Church in France appealed to its members to subscribe, individually, a very small sum, possibly the equivalent of sixpence, to finance the production of a feature film on the life of Vincent de Paul. The response was remarkable, and sufficient money was obtained to enable the film to be professionally produced. Maurice Cloche directed it. It is now ready, or nearly so, and I believe the result is magnificent. In this country one frequently hears that lack of funds is holding up religious film-making. If, then, all the Churches united, as I have suggested, and asked everyone to give sixpence, or to be really daring, a shilling, to provide money to launch the production of a series of films designed to explain the meaning of religion, and to reveal the startling fact that it can become a power capable of overthrowing materialistic tyranny, and of freeing the peoples from the prisons their countries have become, would not the response be overwhelming? Of course it would. The barrier to progressive religious film production is not lack of money, but lack of determination and vision.

If and when this centralised Christian production group is formed, the films it should plan would be about common humanity, infused with that elusive quality, charity. They would need to be simple and courageous. Films presenting characters arguing about religion, condemning it, discovering it, living by it. Films making it perfectly clear that Christ meant exactly what He said, and that His teachings have just one meaning; not two, or six, or eight.

And if the producers felt they would like to film the lives of saints, they will find them in hospitals, coal mines, fish queues. Unknown saintly folk whose powers of endurance deserve lasting tribute. Folk who are essentially religious, but who would probably deny the fact, and who have not discovered how to make full use of their spiritual strength.

Films which will differentiate between religious ceremonial and religious living, for surely one of the dangers in this world is keeping up an appearance of religion, and paying homage to God in all sorts of picturesque ways which do not interfere with one's un-Christian mode of living. Better no religion at all than that. As Rousseau wrote: "Never let us confuse the ceremonial of religion with religion. The worship God demands is that of the heart, and this worship, when it is sincere, is always uniform".

But unless the Churches do unite for this purpose, pool their resources, and become organised, spiritually, technically—and quickly—then religious films will go on being just religious films, the majority of people will remain beyond reach, and once again Christianity will fail to save humanity. This time, it will most certainly lead us to . . .

. . . THE END



De Pokkers Unger

Dansk Kulturfilm and Nordisk

TWO HUMAN DANISH FILMS

By

RAGNA JACKSON

AT A TIME when a big country such as America spends millions and millions of dollars producing more or less mediocre films, it is interesting to see how certain small countries with very limited money and rather old-fashioned equipment succeed where the other fails.

Denmark has lately made two very remarkable films. This little country has, however, a fact which is often forgotten, some fine film records from the silent period. As a matter of fact, in the very early days of the moving pictures, it was one of the greater producing countries and claims to have made the first so-called long film, i.e. a two-reel film.

But then for many years nothing interesting was produced. It was only from the middle of the Thirties and during the war that some good films showed that they had not quite forgotten their traditions. One of the reasons for the comparatively mediocre production is certainly the great financial difficulties under which Danish producers are

working. It is extremely hard for a Danish producer to get his expenses covered, let alone make a profit. Of 116 cinemas 96 are showing American films, and even though every big Danish company now has its own cinema, the extremely high entertainment tax creates another difficulty. Recently, though, the Danish films began to become popular in Sweden and Norway which is of great financial importance.

The Danish critics too, are not too kind towards the films made by their countrymen. Even Carl Th. Dreyer's film *Day of Wrath*, which had an immense success in London, was not very graciously received by the critics in Copenhagen.

But in spite of all this there was and still is a nucleus of young artists full of enthusiasm and courage. Among them are the married couple Astrid and Bjarne Henning-Jensen, who as co-directors have made *Ditte Menneskebarn* (Edith—a human being) and *De Pokkers Unger* (The Mischievous Imps).



Ditte Menneskebarn (above and below) *Nordisk*

Both directors were formerly stage-actors and started their film career by making documentaries. One of the most interesting of these was about horses. It showed the private life of a certain horse from its birth until at four years old it obtained a gold medal.

Then in 1943 Bjarne Henning-Jensen, assisted by his wife, directed his first long film, a comedy with a bohemian setting about young painters and their struggle, but it was really with *Ditte Menneskebarn* they showed their capacity.

The film, produced by Nordisk Films Kompagni, is after a novel by the Danish author Andersen-Nexø, the script written by Henning-Jensen himself. The film tells the story of Ditte (Edith) from her illegitimate birth until she herself, very young, is expecting an illegitimate child. It is a film about very poor country people who have an unlimited amount of bad luck. Ditte's mother murders her own mother to get in possession of a very small amount of money and goes to prison. Her husband by whom she has three other children is betrayed by his brother for his last penny. Ditte, herself a child, cares for the family until she is old enough to start working as a maid for other people, but even with all these tragic accidents it is not a sordid or grim film at all. In the midst of all the disasters the little family stick together. The stepfather is goodness itself, they remain human beings with warm hearts and do not forget to smile.

Tove Maas, who plays Ditte, is the personification of a little simple, thoroughly good girl, who is always doing her duty with kindness and a smile. There is a very beautiful and pure scene, when she is bathing in a little lake and

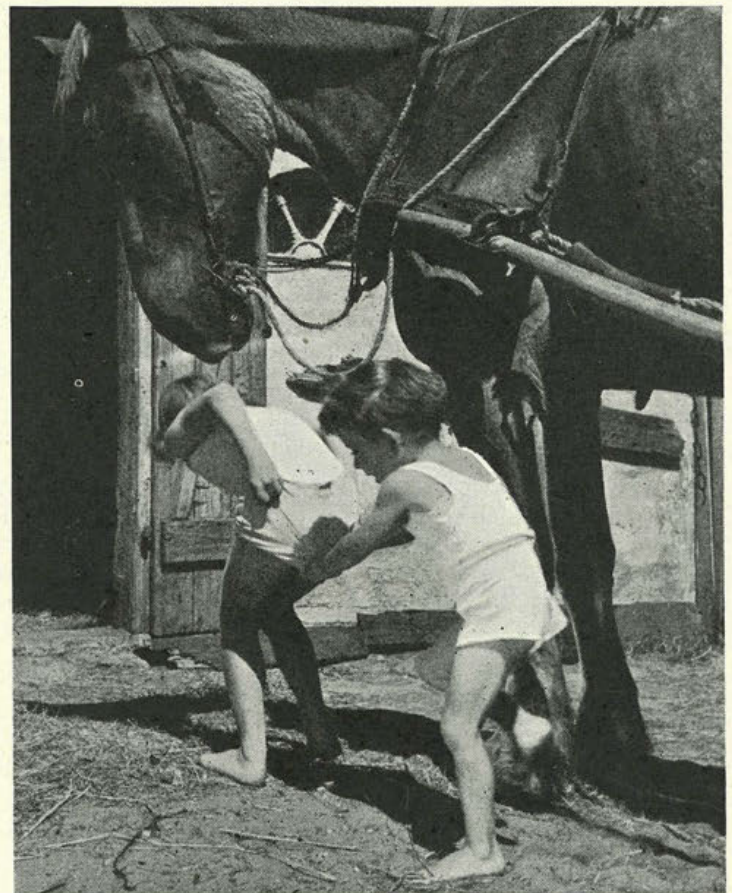
suddenly discovers her own body and becomes aware of its beauty. I doubt if anything could be more perfect. The son of the house, acted by Preben Neergaard, who almost by accident seduces her, is a weak person dominated by his mother. But all actors are very well chosen and the atmosphere of the film is very true to life.

The other film *De Pokkers Unger*, produced by Dansk Kulturfilm and Nordisk Films Kompagni, is taken in the slums of Copenhagen. Here the main characters are children of all ages. It describes their eternal fight against lodge-keepers and their complete surprise and lack of understanding when they finally get a kind one, who does not grumble and forbid them everything. The kind lodge-keeper is accused of stealing, and it is the children who find the real criminal, which gives them an opportunity to use their imaginations and involves them in many funny situations. This film—in spite of its sordid surroundings—has its smile.

I think the secret of the success, I could even say the perfection, of these two films is to be found mainly in the thoroughly honest and enthusiastic approach with which the directors have tackled their task. They themselves sum it up with these words:

"A film must have an idea and fight for this idea. The word propaganda is always connected with politics, but one can also very well make propaganda for goodness and humanism, and why not do it with a smile?"

It seems so simple and obvious, but why do so few succeed in doing it? Is it possible that with all our technical perfections many directors have forgotten to be human beings and to smile?



BRITISH FILM MUSIC

A book review by

STUART KEEN

FILM MUSIC, and especially British film music, is rapidly becoming a subject of keen interest and enquiry amongst discriminating filmgoers, to say nothing of its increased importance in open discussions in Film Societies, youth clubs and schools, where film appreciation generally is gaining ground. Hitherto, it is believed, Kurt London's invaluable "Film Music" has been the only reliable reference book on the subject, but that was published in 1936, since when there have been rapid developments—in fact the whole question of film music in England has become of new and vital concern to a younger generation of cinema enthusiasts. The arrival of John Huntley's book,* therefore, is well timed and his approach to the subject, which is in absolutely the right vein, has the authority of extensive knowledge backed by enthusiasm. His book does seem to live up to its publisher's assertion that it is a complete survey of film music in Great Britain from the earliest days of the silent picture to the present day. With the aid of references to Kurt London's work he sketches the history of film music in general from its beginnings in 1900, when it was used largely to drown the noise of the projector, on through the development of the large orchestras in the more mature silent cinema (for which many still sigh wistfully), to the early days of sound. Finally he traces from 1935 onwards the important progress of film music in this country, in which many of our best contemporary composers have had a part. Among names associated with film music here the most prominent is that of Muir Matheson. One probably does not fully realise until one has read this book what an incredible contribution this Scotsman has made in so short a time, for not only has he taken part in the musical direction of a seemingly never-ending list of films of every calibre, but he has been personally responsible for engaging the interest of composers of distinction in this field of creation, so that British films have, as a consequence, gained in stature and integrity.

FUTURE PROGRESS

John Huntley believes that future progress is quite unpredictable. However, the guiding principles have been collected and set down for all to read in the special contributions included in the book by such distinguished authorities as Vaughan Williams, Muir Matheson, Louis Levy and Arthur Bliss.

The twenty photographs reproduced are an excellent selection, several films of particular musical interest, such as *Henry V* and *Men of Two Worlds*, are analysed in detail,

* British Film Music, by John Huntley (Shelton Robinson, 1947, 17/6d.)



De Pokkers Unger

(See opposite page)

there is a complete list of the gramophone records of film music now available, and a biographical index of composers, music directors, sound recordists, sound track stars and film music writers. In fact this book is of quite absorbing interest as well as being a mine of information, and it could easily be made the basis of an entertaining lecture or series of lectures on the general subject of film music and on its use (and misuse), its expression and its effect on certain particular films. It is a pleasure to read on page 187 the following statement by Muir Matheson: "We are beginning to learn that the transition from music to speech is of the greatest importance to the flow of the sound track; this is a point that has not always been as carefully considered as it should be". One could not agree more, for one often has the feeling that music, especially in documentaries about shipyards, etc., is brought in for two purposes: either to fill in the slightest pause in the commentary or else to make us strain our ears in order to hear the commentator. Surely this competition between sounds is ridiculous? Why not omit the music altogether and use it only when it can be done intelligently in the more lyrical type of documentary, such as *Cyprus is an Island*?

However, as regards John Huntley's book, one would say that "British Film Music" has at once established itself as the standard work of reference on the subject and its value as such dismisses the need for minor criticisms.

THE HORSE

TOTEM ANIMAL OF AMERICAN FILMS

By
PARKER TYLER

IN THAT INFORMAL REALM of civilized thought and action where the vestiges of primitive life survive, the horse and the dog are rivals for fame as American totems. "Civilized" man must have relatively domesticated totems. And it is natural that film, recorder of movement, should be the art pre-eminently glorifying animals today. Despite movies as successful as *Lassie* and *Son of Lassie*, the dog must bow, as American totem, to the horse. This ascendancy is logical for two reasons. While space was used picturesquely and effectively in *Lassie's* long journey back home, the range of movement open to what Americans term the "horse opera", and the superiority of the horse as power-symbol, determine the issue of rivalry. After all, the dog is a creature more domesticated than the horse; he gets as close to man as the interior fireside and even his bedroom, whereas, in the living-quarters sense, the horse is more intimate at the open camp fire. Moreover, a dog, especially if small, can be embraced more wholly and is more articulately and aggressively affectionate than the horse. This seemingly superior intimacy between man and his dog, however, is offset by the folk experience of the American cowboy—that experience recorded so voluminously by Hollywood. The cowboy *rides* his animal, and at the same time is more dependent on its power than North American man, below the Arctic regions, is on the dog's power. The physical contact between cowboy and horse—an animal bigger than man—provides an emblem, as well as a drama, of mastery that transcends (assuredly in the æsthetic domain) the easier, more urban and commonplace, relations between man and his "best friend", the dog.

Obviously, too, the horse gives the drama of good and evil a more distinctive place in story and legend. As a "wild animal", the horse may be tamed, whereas wild dogs offer men no temptation to tame them. Temperamentally unruly horses, furthermore, yield mysteriously to gifted individuals. In movies, the horse of evil character, which sometimes offsets the docile horse, has a term in American-Spanish lingo also applied to a man: "bad hombry". The best dog movie, in my opinion, came from England, *To the Victor*, which was about sheep dogs. Not only was there the sporting angle (duplicated in the equine domain by racing) but also the drama of blood, moral and immoral. In *To the Victor*, it is not the hero, or totemic, dog who turns out to be the nocturnal sheep-killer, but his rival. This film was excellent precisely because of its moral scope, and because, moreover, this scope subtly reflected the moral struggles in human character. This (like the American-made *The Yearling*, about a faun) was an extraordinarily *civilized* animal picture. "Horse operas", dedicated to a minimum of sheer violence, are more casual and crass, but highly pertinent, nevertheless, to our national mores. Over here, horse films tend to be inadvertent legends—invariably, if also unconsciously, totemic in nature.

SYMBOLISM

As England and Europe are more thoughtfully aware than we ourselves, America is the land of, among other things, "the open prairie" and "the lone cowboy"; alone, save for his eternal partner: the horse. This coupling is paradigm for the pagan myth-creature, the Centaur. The man-horse becomes a pseudo-organism; a cowboy has a grandeur and a sense of power, with his horse under him, which he could not possibly have afoot. Totemically speaking, this is a merging between the religious-magical image, the clan emblem, and the work animal. But the *personal* relation, with its imaginative reverberation, makes the mythical importance of the American man-horse. The horse is not only a power-symbol as a fleshly engine but as an extension of the man's personal power and, more specifically, of his sexual power. With these considerations, one can register more accurately the emotional impact of the film image of a beautiful and powerful horse, mane afloat, rearing against an empty horizon: this is a simple traditional emblem as old as the American film industry itself. A man, traditionally, is seen already on the horse's back; the struggle for mastery has been implicitly won, and this mastery brings American man his power over both equine and bovine herds. In more serious films, the riderless or yet untamed horse becomes a symbol for man himself—objectively or subjectively, father or son—and sometimes symbol for woman, the woman to be sexually rejected or obtained. The function of the totem animal in the primitive initiation rite for pubescent boys was a parable of birth from the animal itself. This "birth" provided a symbolic origin which the youth could identify as absolute, superseding his mother's womb as scene of his father's fruit; in this way, his incestuous rivalry was replaced by a father-identification, with the sexual element of the mother lacking. "The lone cowboy", in this perspective, is the initiated youth joined to the totemistic father-animal, which, as the horse's rider, he has symbolically vanquished.

Let us take for granted the regulation horse-operas, or Grade B westerns. These have their human screen idols who embody this totemistic evolution of man-horse in a strictly static sense; actors such as Roy Rogers, Ken Maynard, Bill Elliott and other, lesser, riders. But of highlighted totemic interest are two fairly recent films, one of which, *The Outlaw*, because of censorship difficulties, has been seen at this writing only on the West Coast and at private showings in New York; the other film is *Gallant Bess*. These two movies must be credited with a degree of originality because of their extremism; even if artistically gauche in their lack of consciousness, they are not uninspired. At the least, they break away from the usual boy-and-girl romance coupled with the winning of big stakes by the boy's or girl's racehorse; the newest exhibit of this latter type is *Homestretch*, in which the fate of the romance and the winning of the race are duly dovetailed.

Let us not be squeamish about the horse race as a symbolic variety of the sexual act, particularly as we must face an analogous, if more complex, symbolism of this kind in *The Outlaw*. The obsessional temper of racing fans and the emotional build-up to a minutes-long suspense (the race itself) accompanied by the wildest excitement and breathlessly climaxed, are factors of racing that testify to its sexual parallel. Moreover, we are compelled, not only in the light of these new movies, but also in the perspective of traditional legend and ritual, to recognize in horse-operas of a significantly totemic kind the presence of the Oedipus-complex. The anticipated result of the initiation rite previously mentioned was precisely the destruction of this complex.

INITIATION RITE

As I have written much to signify, the mass unconscious is given free play by the Hollywood policy of catering to the most ancient of popular stereotypes, in which—inevitably—lies a basic substratum of primitive superstition; here the stereotype is the western adventure story. In the *Flicka* pictures, Roddy McDowall portrayed the boy isolated on a farm and striving to establish symbolic power by befriending and mastering a horse; first, a mare and then this mare's son. This was a vestigial, purely individualistic effort to achieve totemic initiation through a horse. Roddy plays a moody youth rebellious towards his father but humoured by his mother. Symbolically, of course, the mare's son is Roddy himself in multiplied power and pitted against the renegade stallion, whom he must succumb to or vanquish. In this way the boy's Oedipus rivalry with his father is displaced to the objective equine drama, made doubly effectual by his ownership of the triumphant stallion; *just because* this plot is a modern vestige, the symbolic totem enters reality and has its drama there. The boy alone is spectator of the crucial fight between the stallions, which takes place in the wilds and which involves, naturally, the leadership of the herd and sovereignty over the mares. Roddy's horse seems to have yielded to domestication, but when his adult power is proven in mortal combat, he takes off to lead the free herd. This anticipates Roddy's own eventual voyage into life beyond his parents' world and virtually proclaims the success of the psychological initiation rite. Another film, *Indiana*, portrayed an adolescent romance in which the boy, by stealth, clandestinely mates two fine racehorses belonging to different stables; not only did this incident provide, in the more obvious sense, a symbolic conjugation with the girl he loved, but also a totemic rite in which the boy could eavesdrop on the parental marriage-bed; by the substitution of the totemic animals, his illicit jealousy is satisfied.

If these symbolic readings of film material appear somewhat exaggerated or overspecial, it is impossible to mistake what is considerably more pointed (deliberately or not) in *Gallant Bess* and *The Outlaw*. The former is straightforwardly—indeed, to the hilt—the story of a youth's obsession with his mare and is the strategic psychic foreshortening of the initiation rite into the struggle to overcome obsession with the maternal sex-image. To summarize the plot: the boy, called to war and enlisting as a Seabee, is parted from Bess, his beloved mare. At camp, his pin-up picture is not of a movie queen but of Bess. Hearing that she is about to bear a colt, the boy

requests leave to go to her but is denied it until his arrival (from his viewpoint) is too late to save her life in the ordeal. In a kind of delirium, he digs her grave during a violent storm and cannot be persuaded by an old farmhand that "since you love her, you'll always have her." Returning to service, he goes with his outfit to prepare an airfield on a captured Japanese island base. There he has nightmares (how oddly literal!) in which he sees Bess—in "negative"—rearing into space; his tent-pals can't sleep because of his groans and outcries and he is physically chastised by his own buddy (one of those cheerful rough-necks who typically supply humour in American films). Finally, one night, he cannot believe that the insistent, pathetic neighing he hears from the jungle is not that of his dead mare, so he gropes his way into the forest, where he finds on the ground a real horse, seriously wounded; needless to say, a mare. With the connivance of his tent-pals and eventually the toleration of his superior officer (a man whose severity turns to good will, and who obviously is a father-image), the boy revives the new Bess and she is established as a sort of troop mascot. Bess does soldier duty and saves her master's life when a Jap sniper shoots him; she also performs tricks in a little corral, at least one of them (the boy is the ringmaster) being most insinuating. Convalescent from his wounds, the boy is scheduled to leave Bess on the island when his outfit is ordered away, but in an excruciating sequence, Bess breaks leash and swims after the transport, where in defiance of regulations she is allowed to clamber on board: boy and horse are reunited. As a dénouement, Bess (on the American farm) successfully bears a colt. Again, the boy hero is the mating agent, but here no sign of a stallion appears; the boy is clearly master of a totemic birth ritual in which he is both the symbolic stallion and the infant colt.

In case anyone believes that this film should be considered innocent of any underlying meaning, I quote verbatim a remark by the boy's wisecracking pal: "Maybe there's something to this love stuff besides *dames*". I submit that my own interpretation is at least free of vulgarity. Furthermore, on the realistic level where such substitutions do take place in the human libido (thus making the film true to life), the story paraphrases in allegory a boy's transference of obsession with his mother (the first Bess) to that with another woman (the second Bess); just so, he might be disconsolate at the death of a beloved mother and then find a girl who would substitute for her. I should add that the emotional tone of the actor taking the youth's role would not have been tolerated had the story been projected in script as about an adolescent crush on a *human* female. In that case, as ironic as the hypothesis is, such an exhibition of masculine emotion would have been condemned as "morbid" and never have been filmed to set before the public!

The Outlaw, as a straight story, is less ingenuous than *Gallant Bess*, although aesthetically, of course, the Howard Hughes production is profoundly inept. The boy (played by a newcomer, Jack Buetel) is a bona-fide outlaw, Billy the Kid himself, second in American legend only, perhaps, to Jesse James, and even more of a lone wolf, since he sets out singly in this movie to avenge his brother's death. A more or less fragile female, apparently, has killed his brother. Let us pass over the more routine innuendoes, as lewd and nude as these are, and turn to what a more

sophisticated censorship might have more reasonably, if less needfully, become alarmed at. In its own oafish manner, the movie extends the power-symbol of the horse to an ambivalent and ambiguous sort of homosexual fixation. Here the stallion, frankly termed a "sweetheart" by a rival outlaw (Walter Huston) is a bone of contention between Billy and said rival, whom it seems adequate to identify by his nickname, "Doc", and who is senior crime champion in the story's locale. Originally, the horse has belonged to Billy; stolen, he has been sold to "Doc", in whose possession Billy finds him and from whom, by hook and crook, he wrests him. Billy, by outbraving and outdrawing "Doc" so arouses the latter's admiration that the two enter an ambiguous partnership, half affection and half enmity. The plot of their rivalry for the horse—obviously, as a stallion, the emblem of sexual power—supersedes their rivalry for said female, and so independently complicated is this major theme that the stallion symbol assumes a realistic value; i.e., the stallion is an actual love-object, a co-extended Narcissus image for each male; certain details indicate that for "Doc" the attractive boy becomes homosexually symbolic of the horse. At one point, the two males bargain for either strawberry roan or girl; when Billy chooses the stallion, dissatisfaction gleams in "Doc's" eyes; the girl forthwith appears in a doorway and—in the screen's most unladylike manner—shouts at Billy: "What! You'd exchange me for a horse?" This howler was apparently conceived as brutal realism. Throughout, the action gives sadism a big play. This fact is not least evident in the amusingly exciting climactic sequence of the formal gun-duel between boy and man to decide by death the parlay-prize of girl and horse, the survivor to claim both. How ingeniously the sporting atmosphere is preserved! This is curiously pointed because twice in the film Billy has been set to shoot the girl, and once he actually gives her the rope-crucifixion—an invention of the Indians—only to reconsider and come back to release her.

As the rivals face each other for the duel, and the clock gives the signal to shoot, Billy's guns remain hanging in his holsters. As "Doc" taunts Billy for cowardice, the former artistically knicks each of his ears with bullets. Psychologically, Billy's inert passivity needs explanation; everything, including manly honour, is at stake. Realistically speaking, something *unconscious* must restrain him. What can this be—if not subconscious homosexuality—but the shadow of the Oedipus guilt falling on his trigger finger? He is faced by a man half of whom is as fond of him as though Billy were his own son, and half of whom, in the symbolic sense of the paternal sex-rival, is bent on destroying him. In the former role, "Doc"—true to his nickname—is the paternal medicine man who, as the rite proceeds, symbolically castrates the initiate by knicking his ears, and yet, as the father afraid of the usurping son, he is ready to literally exterminate Billy. This combination of personalities in "Doc" might well paralyze Billy through sheer bewilderment as to the proper identification; guilt and innocent faith contend in his heart. That this scene is saturated with a quasi-homosexual atmosphere is proven by a sub-plot of the affections—no less than an old and sentimental friendship between "Doc" and a fourth character, a rather ridiculous sheriff (Thomas Mitchell) who has tagged along and finally caught up with the two outlaws. During the duel, the sheriff (fleeced of his guns) is a helpless bystander, an emasculated figure who raises loud complaint

against Billy as cause of his alienation from "Doc" and starts sobbing. One might hazard that this disqualified symbol of law is a masquerade for the wife and mother, whose spirit here interferes with the initiation rite because it is *lethally real*, not a true rite. The girl, although present, is purely negative. Despite the sheriff's wails and his own indecision, Billy at last draws and kills "Doc", thus fulfilling what is to be identified, finally and specifically, as a symbolic Oedipus destiny.

Accordingly, in this film, the virtual totemic rite has fizzled and become *drama*. What appears on the surface as perhaps the most outrageous "fairy tale" of all westerns somehow manages to emerge as the most dramatic and least neatly symbolic of filmdom's masked totemic rites. First, the horse is never in the movie as a dramatic factor: "Doc" himself is a sort of Centaur, a paternal outlaw whose traditional ascendancy has been challenged by a stripling novice. Here a mythological parallel is fortunate: Greek myth has it that Chiron, a Centaur, instructed the hero, Achilles, in the arts of peace and war. I suggest Billy's parallel with Achilles also for another reason, for it was Achilles who retired from the Trojan war until he was moved to avenge the death of his bosom friend, Patroclus, and Billy's original motive in the story was simply revenge for his brother's death. Sexual rivalry, however, was automatically thrust on Billy by events. But the significant thing between the two males of *The Outlaw* is that only *one* set of essentials, girl and horse, exists for them. Obviously, the physically desirable female will not suffice either of them: the totemic symbol, the stallion—almost identical with the self—is also necessary. It is the *human* relations, the impersonation of the human father by "Doc", that complicates the boy's totemic imagination. It is as though "Doc" were a medicine man who desired to undermine the ritual totemic release to be considered the boy's traditional right, and this precisely because, perhaps, "Doc's" own totemic release, in terms of modern society, has not been completed, rendered authentic. He himself is to be conceived as a "son" whose initiation once failed, perhaps also became real, violent drama. Are Billy and "Doc", after all, not *outlaws*, traditional bad-men who are paradigms for the rebellious sons of the original "herd"? We must not fail to note that the "outlaw" is a renegade member of the cowboy clans.

Nor must we overlook that, in the trance of the movie theatre, one is inclined to forget too easily that popular fiction represents a vast cultural residue. Yes, movie stories are made up "out of someone's head", but because of this very openness of viewpoint towards the chosen material—that feverish invention so peculiar to Hollywood—what we term "superstition" holds sway. We speak of "romances", of "melodramas", little realising, as a rule, the religious-magical vestiges that inhere in the integument of these terms as imaginative forms. So it is with the totemic role of the horse in American films. In one sense, the cowboy and his horse (they are often co-starred in American films) are obvious and simple, like a coat-of-arms; in another sense, as in *Gallant Bess*, ancient totemism is fused with modern neuroticism; in still another, as in *The Outlaw*, the horse is present as a sort of totem fantasy: a coveted power-fetich without which the female cannot seem completely desirable—or completely won. After killing "Doc" and mourning at his grave, Bill starts away alone on his roan stallion; a few moments before the movie flashes off, the girl is permitted to jump up behind him and the three go off out of the picture.



The Long Night

R.K.O. Radio

"THE LONG NIGHT" AND "LE JOUR SE LÈVE"

By

ROGER MANVELL

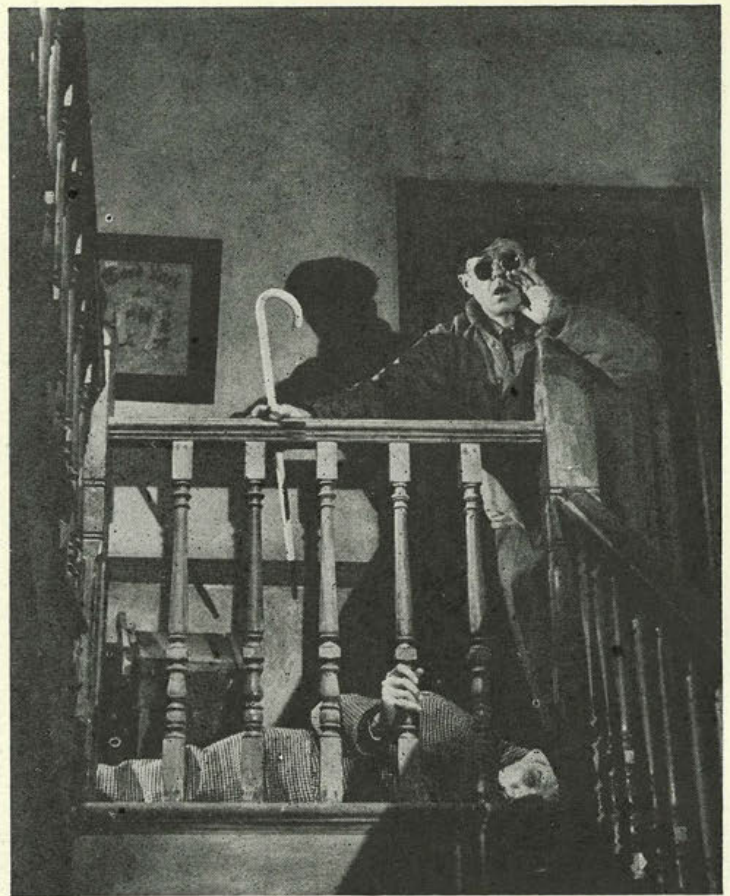
THIS ARTICLE is not being written in a carping spirit against *The Long Night*, which is the Hakim Brothers' version, produced in association with Anatole Litvak, of the Carné-Prévert film *Le Jour se lève*. I have already associated myself with the bitter attack made by British film critics upon the principle operating in the film industry which allows a picture to be bought and sold as a commodity rather than being treated with the respect due to a potential work of art. Whilst there is obviously no objection to different producers making films on the same subject, there is every objection to producers being allowed to destroy the work of their predecessors, as happened in the case of *Gaslight* and, as far as the English-speaking world is concerned, in the case of *Le Jour se lève*. The single titled print of this resides in the vaults of the National Film Library with strict instructions it shall never be shown

until permission is given by the American company which bought from France the rights to the story. It is a shock to see *The Long Night* with whole sequences copied directly from the original, but, of course, with no acknowledgment whatsoever in the credits.

I regard *Le Jour se lève* as the best Carné-Prévert production; an intense, dynamic, human and moving tragedy. It is here very competently degraded into a melodrama with a happy ending. Henry Fonda is in himself an excellent choice to double for Gabin: both have the power to suggest a sensitive man beneath the rough exterior of an ordinary worker. Ann Dvorak plays the good-natured tart with a pleasant American zest, but it is unfair to compare her performance with that of Arletty, who possesses the rare secret of power over men because she can suggest

a self beyond their reach, however easy the immediate gift of her body. Ann Dvorak acts on the same ordinary plane of simple give and take as the man with whom she associates in the film. Vincent Price plays the sadistic and masochistic showman just like a gentleman seducer in a Victorian novelette, over-educated in the snobbish sense and suave to the point of impossibility. Jules Berry in the French film handled this difficult character from *within*; he let this cruel madman possess him, and played him realistically with that conviction of personal integrity which only a madman can feel about his peculiarities. Vincent Price's performance is just a polite veneer assumed for the benefit of the film: the real devil is not in him. The discovery of the American film is the young girl, played by Barbara Bel Geddes with all of the flair of a newcomer chosen because she is just right for the part: she has innocence combined with toughness; she is a decent American working-girl. She does not possess any of the charming, wide-eyed reticence, the quiet possessive passion which the French actress, Jacqueline Laurent, gave her Françoise. But Barbara Bel Geddes will do handsomely.

It is impossible to view *The Long Night* without it bringing back strong memories of the emotions associated with *Le Jour se lève*, and continually falling short of those memories because it dare not set out to be a film in the same class. The patrons of the American and British cinema would stand neither for the morals nor the sheer human tragedy of the French film. The strength of treatment in the French film is therefore emasculated in the new version, and the killing of the stuffed dummy of a villain has nothing of the urgency and human rightness when Gabin at last shoots Jules Berry and one cries out "Thank God," and feels the world a cleaner place. There is in both films the same satire against the police, the same excellent situation of a decent man hunted and isolated from the people who trust him and the women who love him. Although the shell of the place and the story is there, the open street thronged with workers and police-cars, the tall tenement block, the deep well of the staircase, the hunted man bemused and



The Long Night

R.K.O. Radio

cornered in his room, the whistling bullets and the tear-gas, the richer feeling for human life and instinct and love always present in the French film is gone. Some of it had to go to satisfy the censor, some of it to match more closely the demands of adolescent patrons. Very well. But why should the rest of us be deprived of the right to see Carné's film in the specialised theatres and film societies?

MAURICE JAUBERT

MAURICE JAUBERT was killed by an enemy aircraft on June 19th, 1940, while engaged in destroying a bridge across the Moselle. The death of a number of fine artists who worked in the French cinema has been noted here: Raimu, Charpin, Aimos, Max Dearly, Harry Baur—but in England that of Jaubert has passed almost without comment. This is perhaps not surprising, since the merit of his contribution to the French film lay precisely in its unobtrusiveness.

Jaubert, who was born at Nice on January 3rd, 1900, wrote incidental music to Jean Giraudoux's stage pieces "Tessa" and "La Guerre de Troie n'aura pas lieu", Vigo's *L'Atalante* and *Zero de Conduite*, Clair's *Le Quatorze Juillet* and *Le Dernier Milliardaire*, Duvivier's *Un Carnet de Bal* and *La Fin du Jour*, Carne's *Le Quai des Brumes*, *Le Jour se lève* and *Drôle de Drame*, and Cavalcanti's *We Live in Two Worlds*. His music for the cinema always exactly fulfils the purpose of a good film score, heightening the mood of a scene without drawing attention to itself as music. In *Le Dernier Milliardaire* Jaubert's burlesque

national anthem wickedly assists Clair's satire of the pompous; but in the Carné and Duvivier films his work is more subtle. The melancholy "Valse Grise" would have little value in the concert hall, but it is exactly right for the mood of *Un Carnet de Bal*; and one needs to see *Le Quai des Brumes* more than once before one realises just how much of the Carné-Prévert "atmosphere" (which distinguishes their films from mere melodrama) is provided by the incidental music. In *Le Jour se lève*, again, the tension of the scene in which the wanted man waits in his tiny tenement room is heightened by music that is no more than a hint, a suggestion.

A great craftsman achieves the maximum effect with the greatest economy of means; and in the medium of film music Jaubert was a great craftsman. "A tant de fuyantes images", wrote Georges Auric, "il découvrait avec une aisance inspirée le commentaire sonore le mieux fait pour nous toucher".

GERALD COCKSHOTT

"FROM CALIGARI TO HITLER"

The Editor of SIGHT and SOUND has received the following letter from Mrs. Robson, author of "The Film Answers Back", "The World is My Cinema" and other books

To THE EDITOR, SIGHT AND SOUND

SIR,—The review of Dr. Kracauer's book, "From Caligari to Hitler" in your summer number interested me greatly. Judging from Mr. Weinberg's careful analysis there is no doubt in my mind that Dr. Kracauer has given us a book of immense value, of value, that is, if the implications of his message are understood and acted upon by film makers everywhere.

I shall show in a moment that the full significance of Dr. Kracauer's thesis as a guide to film making is not even quite well grasped by Mr. Weinberg, though he is getting close to it; but first permit me to stake the claim for Great Britain as the country which was the first to show the connection between the fictional Caligari and the factual Hitler and his Nazi State.

After many years of research, my husband and I completed "The Film Answers Back", published in 1939 by The Bodley Head Ltd. In this book the Caligari thesis was first given to the world, and, to those who may be interested, I am assured by Sir Stanley Unwin that the book will be on sale again shortly. I claim the credit for Britain, not for myself, because it seems to be the historical destiny of our country to initiate the first embryonic stages of the major inventions and discoveries which other countries oft times extend and expand. The well known story of atomic research is a case in point.

A WARNING

I claim, moreover, that the Caligari thesis is applicable to all countries and all film industries. Indeed, anyone who reads our 1939 publication will see that the moral-mental state of the French film gave us deep cause for anxiety for the future of France. What happened to France in 1940 is history. What can happen and is happening in our own country can be read as in a reflecting mirror in current British film production. The most casual glance at your own *Monthly Film Bulletin* month by month will show that Caligari is stalking our land as he once strode over Germany. That he often assumes a disguise, sometimes as a Dickensian character, sometimes as a spiv, very often as a pathological murderer, and now and again as James Mason; the fact remains that beneath the disguise there grins the odious visage of Caligari with all the horrible implications that his presence in this country may portend.

Do our leaders of opinion on both sides of the Atlantic realise what is happening, not only in British but in American film production too? In a recent issue of the "Sunday

Times", Miss Dilys Powell did me the honour of linking Dr. Kracauer's book with my own, recently published "The World Is My Cinema" (Sidneyan Society 12/6), dismissing both with an air of disdainful scepticism. All thoughtful people have been unanimous for years in the conviction that the film is the most powerful mind conditioning instrument in the world, yet when a specific example like Germany is pointed to, our leading lights turn aside, shudder and will not believe or accept or understand.

QUESTION MARK

I welcome Dr. Kracauer as an ally in this fight, but I am rather perturbed, because, despite his analysis, he seems to nurse the old æsthetic allegiances, if Mr. Weinberg's review is anything to go by. I hope I am not doing Dr. Kracauer an injustice. Mr. Weinberg writes of "Raving Mabuses who committed fantastic crimes with impunity", yet earlier in his article he says: "Caligari, Siegfried, etc. are still works of film art—Kracauer does not say that they are not".

If "art" can still be applied to the Weimar German film output then language has lost its meaning and its function. Art should serve to inspire the individual and to preserve mankind. How can a body of work that depresses the individual and destroys a nation still claim the appellation "art"? Millions of people have been gassed and tortured and slaughtered; the whole world has been corrupted and demoralised by the mental-moral plague which has spread from Germany now that the barriers are down; all this is happening through the social and mental preparation that the German film provided, and yet says Weinberg that German film may still be worshipped as "art".

Let us keep our minds perfectly clear on this question of definition and the precise meaning of language, for upon this as much as upon coal or exports rests the future destiny of this country and of the world. If we all determine to think clearly and make the type of fictional film that offers life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, then mankind will live.

But if we persist in nursing the old sense impressions, worshipping art as if it were unrelated to day to day life, then mankind may pass through another and worse Nazi regime as a preliminary to disappearing off the earth altogether.

Yours faithfully,

MARY M. ROBSON

STEREOSCOPIC FILM

An eye witness account by

JOSEPH MACLEOD *from Moscow*

THE CINEMA IS A former concert-hall seating about 220. As in all Soviet cinemas, performances are not continuous. All seats are booked in advance, and you wait in the foyer till the previous house has come out. There is a big run on seats, although the film is showing all day long; and the only man who wangled his way in when the house was full, it is said, was a young film enthusiast who had travelled from Siberia for the purpose.

As the house lights go down, a voice on a loudspeaker calls for attention and advises you not to move your head from side to side, once the show has started. As a result of this advice, everybody begins peering sideways and inclining their heads to see what happens.

What happens is that a kind of rising-sun effect appears to fill the screen, raying out from the centre bottom and disappearing as soon as you restore your head to its normal position on your neck. Otherwise, there is only a slight discomfort as if there were something in front of your eyes, gauze perhaps, or as in those curious focus tests used by some oculists with a visible but non-existent line moving over a page. Normal eyes, I suppose, could stand this indefinitely, but I doubt if mine would have been very happy after much more than the hour and a quarter of stereoscopic film in its present stage of development.

The screen, which is made, I was told, of millions of chips of glass, looks like any ordinary screen, though it is pitched high. Occasionally something like a sound track was visible on the left side. We used no special lenses or apparatus of any kind.

At first the unusual nature of the projection is not noticed, for credit titles are superimposed on a background of mountainous seas, and it may be that the double focus so created destroyed the vividness of the background. By the time the credits are gone your eyes are used to the seas.

The story was *Robinson Crusoe*, a second, improved version.

It was only when Crusoe in his shipwreck throws a rope to a drowning sailor that you get the first shock. The rope comes hurtling and curling right out of the screen into the darkness over your head. At you! You duck. We all did. After that we were ready for anything.

Clever use has been made in exploring the kind of shots that will make the best use of the new idiom. Thus, when Crusoe swims ashore and enters the jungle, it is a curiously luminous jungle due, I think, to the light percolating downwards and sideways through leaves and branches in perspective as it did between the wing-flats of an 18th century theatre. This luminous effect resembles the unearthly atmosphere of the Insect or Tropical Bird House cases in the London Zoo. As if light were liquid. As if the heat were tangible. This liquidity gives magical point to the echoes when Crusoe shouts or animals roar.

You soon accept the new screen convention of Crusoe's personal *roundness* and take it for granted. Other chances must be taken to keep the new idiom alive. They come from the animals which Crusoe encounters. Each is startlingly real; and when a civet cat crawls out on a branch over the auditorium our delight is unbounded. Another useful introduction is Crusoe's dog, rescued from the wreck, a kind of lightly-built St. Bernard with a curled tail. He keeps space alive and personal around Crusoe, even when there is no photographic frame in the foreground. But in the main, advantage is continually taken of shooting through fore-frames of ropes or branches or the archway of a tree.

DEPTH AND LONELINESS

Sometimes the foreground itself comes alive. As Crusoe advances down a corridor of undergrowth, the camera tracks backwards in front of him. Out in the auditorium, about three rows in front of you, leaves and lianas materialise in the air, dangle and dance, and float away into Crusoe's face. Parakeets and small birds sit on them; or fly out at you from the screen and vanish over your head; or form themselves out of nothing into a cluster of wings in the darkness. Their musical chattering is also in the air all round you and there is no need here as in an ordinary cinema to adjust this depth of sound to the flat conventions on the screen several yards away.

Personally, I am allergic to spiders. I was nauseated by an immense brute as real as life and half as large as the screen within what appeared to be a hand's grasp of my nose!

Darker scenes are apt to be blurred. But the lighter scenes are brilliant, though lighting seems to be as tricky as for colour films. There are no dissolves. A scene is ended with a fade or, for passage of time, with a wipe.

The depth is used cleverly to increase our sense of Crusoe's loneliness. We hear him talking to his dog about the hard work necessary after a storm (and what a storm! wind became visible!) has destroyed his house. Our sense of touch, stimulated by the clarity of perspective as in an Italian painting, gives a new contact with *things*, stones, planks, tackle, rushlight, and gives a new energy to Crusoe's pile-driving. The echoes of his pipe-music not only fill in a harmony to his tune, but suggest his location, a little private sound in a huge and hostile world. When he goes down with fever, therefore, though little dialogue has been possible, he is a real person to us. Sensation in place of speech has placed us inside his head. We fight every inch of the way with him toward survival and recovery.

Twenty-five years have passed before he discovers the footprint on the sand. He has now a flourishing farm and follows watchfully the movements of a canoe fleet of natives from another island. The conventional "telescope" shot leaps into vivid new life with the condensed brightness of the war dance seen through it. Similarly a new depth is given to the sea water, as he begins to row his own little dug-out under the great rocks of a little creek. With sharpness and cruelty unobtainable in ordinary films, arrows wing through the air over our heads at the runaway Man Friday.

So far this film has by no means lacked interest or action apart from its technical novelty; nor indeed, pathos, as in the death of Crusoe's dog. To these are now added dialogue. Man Friday's first attempts at Crusoe's language and Crusoe's early methods of communication are natural and entertaining. "Hands think", says Friday in an early lesson; "Heads? Heads eat". Friday is very simple, rather stupid, but attractive and handy. He eats Crusoe's salt and they are more friends than master and servant. We see them ploughing together, mending nets, exchanging their respective traditional songs on the seashore. The close-up of a hand making fire with a burning glass raises interesting speculations about the special advantages of three-dimensional documentaries in time to come. We should be on the look out for this.

A strikingly beautiful shot of a ship in full sail close inshore (and the effect of stereoscopic photography on the canvas, ropes, and wood of a sailing ship cannot be described except in terms of goldsmith's work) unexpectedly brings the wide world curving round Crusoe's island. Throughout the picture we have been made continually aware of man's muscles and knowledge. Now Crusoe is back in 17th century London, smoking a quiet churchwarden pipe and reflecting on his adventures. The entire sensations and surprises of over an hour are given point and meaning. The clever hands of men working together have made this wonderful thing a city, just as Crusoe built his island home and lived with Friday his island life out of nothing but human genius.

THE "BIRTH OF A NATION" CONTROVERSY

The Editor, *Sight and Sound*

DEAR SIR,

In his reply to Peter Noble's article in the Spring issue of *SIGHT AND SOUND*, Mr. Seymour Stern waxes dogmatic, biased, and fanatical. In his opinion Griffith is the Master and could therefore have done no wrong. In an unconvincing argument he seeks to give us "the facts" and close the subject, in his own words, "once and for all".

I sincerely hope that *SIGHT AND SOUND* will not allow the matter to rest here; for the clash of the two articles should leave the young film students, at whom each writer aims his arguments, more bewildered and muddled than before.

Mr. Stern turns at once to history to prove his point. He describes Griffiths' portrayal of events as having "a degree of authenticity, documentation, objectivity, and scholarship seldom if ever equalled on the screen". What a dogmatic statement! How many interpretations are there of history? I am sure that English history as taught in schools leaves much to the imagination. Mr. Stern makes much of a book called "The Clansman", in which Griffith put so much faith that he even called his picture by that name when it was first shown. Of this book Gilbert Seldes, well-known American writer and critic, writes that it was "a particularly cheap, prejudiced, socially vicious and on the whole contemptible novel of the postwar period in the South". Bardèche and Brasillach (*History of the Film*) giving their interpretation of *The Birth of a Nation*, say that it showed the era of reconstruction in a somewhat romantic light, the Ku Klux Klan playing a glorious and active role, and the Negroes appearing principally as deep-dyed villains indulging in acts of terrorism. After trying to excuse the tremendous criticism that has always been levelled at the film by explaining that one title is missing from the Museum of Modern Art print, Mr. Stern, no doubt reflecting his Master's ideology, now engages in a most astounding piece of reaction. He compares the reconstruction period in the South with Europe's situation in 1940, with the South as an "occupied country" and the Ku Klux Klan, that vile body of terrorists formed by the dispossessed slave owners, as a "partisan movement" formed by "the people". Anyone who disagrees with this wild interpretation is called a "totalitarian liberal", though what this strange contradiction in terms means, only Mr. Stern could know.

If the young film students wish to study another angle on the reconstruction period, they should read "Freedom Road" by Howard Fast (*The Bodley Head*). For the authenticity of his account Mr. Fast cites a list of historical material now lying in American National Archives, such as "The Testimony of the Joint Select Committee to inquire into the condition of affairs in the late insurrectionary States"—thirteen volumes in all, Carl Schurz's report to Congress on conditions in South Carolina, Georgia, etc., editorials from both Northern and Southern newspapers of the time, besides debates in Congress and various other books. "The Clansman" naturally is absent from this list!

Anyway, if we are to prove anything by quoting history, why not let us quote the history of *The Birth of a Nation* itself? I

should say that we have ample proof of its distorted nature by the long line of criticisms that, on Mr. Stern's own admission, have been levelled at it down through the years; that it has started riots, that its exhibition has been banned by the Museum of Modern Art, that tests carried out in American schools confirmed that it creates racial bias—and so on. What more do we want? Just because Griffith is famous for his contribution to the art of the cinema, are we also to accept his ideologies? Hitler built the finest roads in the world and Mussolini made the trains run on time. Griffith invented the close-up. O.K.

Regarding Mr. Stern's next attack on Mr. Noble, he goes on to "prove" that the portrayal of negroes as "comedy relief" is not anti-racial, his argument being that negroes have always been portrayed like this and that everyone does it and why shouldn't Griffith. Griffith himself, the son of a Confederate army officer, born and bred in the South, says, "I like Negroes (the faithful souls)", and says it one suspects in much the same manner as one says "I like dogs".

Mr. Stern now engages in an extraordinary form of argument. He quotes a number of facts about the stage and screen in which he says childishly "Mr. Noble obviously does not know". It is a sort of quiz-answer most of which is very common knowledge—"The first time a negro played a serious role was in 'Emperor Jones' 'Shuffle Along' was the first coloured revue—'Hallelujah' and 'Hearts in Dixie' were the first two all-coloured films". So what? The other things that Mr. Noble "does not know" are that certain white actors, by means of make-up, portray Negroes, Chinese or other nationals and this is supposed to prove that D. W. Griffith is not anti-Negro. Mr. Noble, by not being aware of these "American customs" is curtly dismissed, while Mr. Stern points a dramatic finger and cries, "Maligner, slanderer, vilifier"! All this is too silly for words.

In a final burst of pro-Griffith applause, Mr. Stern, who denies being an idolater, refers to Griffith as "THE creative master of the screen, the father of the art and probably the outstanding artistic genius which America has so far produced". Break it down, Mr. Stern, you are running away with yourself.

Summing up, it seems that what makes Mr. Stern so hot under the collar is that he has a hatred of anything savouring of the progressive. Mr. Noble once acted in a play by Clifford Odets, so that makes him a Red. "Red", "Stalinist", "Propagandist"! screams Mr. Stern. We have heard it all before and know that red-baiting is a dangerous occupation. I do not know Mr. Noble or what his politics are, but for his exposition of Griffith's anti-racial bias he deserves applause. Griffith's picturisation of Negroes as villains and buffoons is bad enough, but by his obvious glorification of the Ku Klux Klan he must stand condemned by every decent-minded person to whom this organisation represents, even to this very day, all that is loathsome to true democrats, in the United States as in every other part of the world.

E. L. CRANSTONE,

17, Coleherne Road, London, S.W.10

THE QUARTER IN BRITAIN

By

ARTHUR VESSELO

THE PESSIMISTIC BRUTALITIES of the last quarter have overlapped palpably into this. So much so that a measure of critical distaste has been expressed, aimed particularly at one film but reacting also by implication against others of the same brand. The film chiefly responsible for the reaction is Cavalcanti's *They Made Me a Fugitive*, a tale of sordidness, corruption and violence almost unrelieved. It is too easy to claim that this film is merely a copy of the American gangster-model, or that it is defectively put together. In fact, the atmosphere of London's underworld is all too plausibly conveyed (let us hope it is no more than imagination); and as for technique, the film is horrifyingly well-made.

It is the mood which is wrong, a mood bearing all the emblems of post-war depression and spiritual confusion. The returned R.A.F. officer, out of place in civilian life and straying into racketeering for an adventurous livelihood, is an unconscious personification of decent humanity demoralized by war and unfitted for peace; and his wild but helpless twistings and turnings in the dark trap in which he finds himself are sinister reflexions of our own state today. From the hero's first step off the path, moral issues become clouded and the end obscure.

A reviewer has seen an unhappy resemblance between the psychological tendencies of *Odd Man Out* and of the German films produced after the defeat of 1918. *Odd Man Out* is a curious target for such a comparison, since it has a genuinely tragic theme, and "defeatism" is surely a word to use warily in such a context; but the attack is shrewd enough if directed elsewhere. *They Made Me a Fugitive* might have come straight out of a German studio of the 'twenties. Half-a-dozen other recent British films, superficially perhaps not quite so obviously in this class, have nevertheless an unpleasant undertone, a parade of frustrated violence, an inversion and disordering of moral values, a groping into the grimier recesses of the mind, which are unhealthy symptoms of the same kind of illness.

MORBID CONCLUSIONS

The Upturned Glass is an example. Here is a brilliant brain-specialist deranged by events into paranoiac murderer and suicide; here are leapings and hurlings to death from high places; here is ambiguous argument about what does and does not constitute sanity and justice. If the G.P. whom James Mason encounters on the road is really supposed to represent sanity, then Heaven help us! for his speeches are materialist cynicism in an extreme form. Yet audiences incline to laugh at his remarks as if they were witty good sense, and the film, for one reason and another, seems to have proved a popular one.

These morbid burrowings are not yet an inevitable feature of British film-production, and with *Frieda* we

emerge again—with some relief—to the surface. This film, instead of indulging us in a post-war nightmare, is a serious attempt to propound, for our conscious consideration, a complicated post-war problem. Can the Nazi spirit be eradicated? How far are the masses of the German people to blame for having allowed themselves to be subjected to it? These, in substance, are the central questions which the film asks, and to which it offers no simple answer. Indeed, it is not the place of a film of this kind to offer a simple answer: all it can do, all it can pretend to do, is to make a dramatic statement of the case, in terms as balanced as possible, and leave us to draw our own conclusions.

Frieda tackles the task with conviction, facing the facts squarely, and not shrinking from some of the awful dilemmas involved. It seems a long film, and structurally somewhat shapeless, and its stage-origins are fairly self-evident; but it is impressively sincere and honest, and that is worth a great deal.

CAVALCADES

No less self-evident than the stage-origins of *Frieda* are the novel-origins of *So Well Remembered* and *The Master of Bankdam*. In the first case of the three, the division into acts is imperfectly concealed; in the second and third (more noticeably in the third) the span of years covered and the occasional breathlessness of continuity straining to catch up with itself are sufficient indications of their source. Nor is this the only point in common between these last two films. Both are Cavalcades of social struggle and of industrial history in the north of England; and even though, if one looks into the matter closely, they differ quite considerably in detail, yet it is surprising how alike they appear at a distance, at least to an uninstructed Southerner, so that the fact that John Mills and Trevor Howard excellently adorn the one, and Stephen Murray and Tom Walls the other, seems to be almost the principal distinction. Both films, incidentally, have accent-difficulties. *So Well Remembered* creates some quite gratuitous ones of its own by manoeuvring American actors on to the Lancashire scene; and if this is a sacrifice to win acceptance on the American market, it hardly seems worth it. *The Master of Bankdam*, on the other hand, is impeccably English; but some of its cast have a habit of slithering bewilderingly from the dialect of Yorkshire to that of Portland Place.

There is a further interesting resemblance between the two films; and that is in their use of interspersed commentary to ease the continuity-difficulties caused by adaptation from the novel-form. The same technique, with variations, occurs also in *The Man Within* and *The Upturned Glass*. As a narrative device, this is one to be used with the greatest circumspection. Under special conditions commentary may be justified in a fiction film, but when one

finds a succession of such films in a short period using it as a prop to continuity, one may reasonably begin to doubt.

FOR CHILDREN

Yet another new film in which commentary finds a place is *Bush Christmas*, a children's adventure-story made in Australia by Children's Entertainment Films. Here, however, we are in a different field. The commentary here is not in basis a prop for the continuity (which often is perfectly self-contained without it) but an extra means of elucidation for the youthful mind; and also it is a way of keeping the film on the upper planes of consciousness, so as to avoid a too hypnotic effect—an effect normal enough in the cinema but possibly unsuitable for children.

Bush Christmas is an admirable film for its purpose. It is far better than *Hue and Cry*; though, for the comparison it should be borne in mind that the latter, as Miss Mary Field has pointed out, was merely a film about children, not primarily for children. Nevertheless *Bush Christmas* remains a better film, better constructed, building up better and more dramatically to a climax, more clearly and simply achieving its set aim. If C.E.F. films to follow are as good, they will be good enough.

With Ken Annakin's *Holiday Camp* we return, by the most gradual of stages, to an adult world. In this film the hubbub and overcrowding and compulsory gaiety of the remarkable social phenomenon named in the title are successfully recaptured. There is a modicum of able and authentic characterization, well churned up with plenty of pure hokum both of character and incident. On the whole, the film is much what one might expect—a good popular effort, by no means lacking in atmosphere, and efficiently seasoned with comedy, but not exactly of profound significance.

AND ADULTS

Of rather more moment is the Launder-Gilliat *Captain Boycott*, a dexterous and amusing account of the addition of a word to the English language (the documentary makers, who are accustomed to presenting all the social problems of the last fifty years in a quarter of an hour, might observe that this film takes ninety-three minutes, employing all the artifices of a large-scale commercial studio, to develop little more than this one point). *Captain Boycott's* success is due not to any ingenuities of technique or to any vast depths of meaning but to the spirit which pervades it—an urbane spirit, an essentially civilized spirit, unjaundiced, looking evenly on all sides of the case, treating Boycott not just as a bully but ultimately as a rather pathetic ass, and—this most surprisingly—using the mirror of the past to reflect indirect irony on the present instead of using the great wisdom of the present (save the mark!) to cast silly ridicule on the past.

It is unfortunate that the film comes down so badly at the very end. Alastair Sim's closing speech is out of key and out of place for a dozen reasons. The whole over-triumphant mood of the closing passage is jarring, coming as it does so close on the death of the heroine's father; and if it were intended to summarize the film's purpose, then it is a sad example of the unnecessary sledge-hammer squashing to pulp an already neatly-shelled nut.

Finally, with *The October Man*, we are back to the atmospheric thriller with underlying (and presumably nine parts unconscious) psychological symbolisms. We are not, however, precisely back where we started, since the atmosphere of Eric Ambler's story is without the more disagreeable elements of *They Made Me a Fugitive* and *The Upturned Glass*. It is possible throughout to feel genuine sympathy for the central character (another first-rate John Mills portrayal) and for his friends; there is little open violence; the rat-in-a-trap theme is softened by the outcome; and the suggestion of paranoia is put forward to be rejected. This manner of film, when free of the extravagantly morbid taint which so often discolours it, can have a good deal more to say to us than appears on the surface, and *The October Man* is not a film to be ignored.

It may be true that some of the personalities are over-drawn and that there are some melodramatic loose ends in the plot; but these things are relatively unimportant beside the implications of the three-sided conflict which is evolved—between the hero, recovering from a head-injury and falsely suspected of aberration into murder, the criminal, scheming to cover his crime, and authority, well-intentioned but fallible, striving uneasily to hold the balance. It is a pity that there is no room in these columns to expand the analysis; but at least one may say that the suspense created, which some have found excessively deliberate and leading up to nothing, is, on the contrary, skilful, pointed, and far from empty if the film is viewed in the right light.

THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

TWO CONFERENCES

THE FILM AND THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH

A Conference on the use of the film throughout the Colonial Empire will be held by the British Film Institute in the Hall of the Royal Empire Society, London, on January 16th, 1948.

Readers of SIGHT AND SOUND in the British Commonwealth of Nations are particularly invited to send constructive suggestions for the agenda of this Conference to the British Film Institute.

THE FILM AND THE UNIVERSITIES

At the request of the Cambridge University Educational Films Council, the British Film Institute and the Scientific Film Association are holding a Conference on the use of the Film in Universities. The Conference will open at the Institute of Education, London, on November 15th.

Items on the Agenda include a discussion on the possibilities of the film as an aid in University Teaching, film appraisal as adapted to University Teaching, and a report on the present situation and possible future co-ordination between Universities, University Colleges, Training Colleges, Local Education Authorities and all other bodies interested in Further Education.

LEGISLATION AND FILM

By

H. H. WOLLENBERG

"People often talk about the film as an industry as if it were a question of machines and workers like any other industry. I prefer also to look upon it as an art and as one of the most important expressions of British culture".

SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

THIS QUOTATION FROM an address by the then President of the Board of Trade to British film producers will be welcomed not only as an important statement of personal appreciation of the cinema. It gains momentum as an indication of policy at a time when new film legislation is under consideration in this country. The present Films Act of 1938 expires early next year. While the new Act is going ahead through the drafting stage, the difficult dollar position called for immediate drastic measures as regards remittances for imported films. At the same time, an international quota formula was set out in the World Trade Charter which, drafted at Geneva, has to be finally accepted by the United Nations conference at Havana, commencing at the end of November. A clause in the Charter makes national film quotas a subject for international review before U.N.O., and this resulted in direct British-U.S. negotiations. All this sums up to a complex subject and may appear baffling to the ordinary friend and visitor of the cinema. This article does not intend to deal with intricate details, nor does it propose to criticise or to submit additional suggestions. Its purpose is to try and show the fundamental premises, the general background of this legislation. Its basic idea can be found in Sir Stafford Cripps's sentence at the beginning.

* * * * *

The ancient Romans, those wise statesmen, administrators and legislators, placed "panem et circenses"—food and entertainment—for the people on an equal footing. In the 17th century the great French thinker, Blaise Pascal, remarked that in the back of the human mind there lurks a sentiment of eternal, universal and inescapable unrest; man is anxious to escape that sentiment and seeks diversion. And in the first half of the 19th century the German philosopher, Arthur Schopenhauer, went still further by describing boredom as a calamity even worse than hunger.

In our day it is the cinema which represents the ideal means of satisfying on the largest possible scale that inherent craving of mankind for entertainment. Films are able to carry it in an unprecedented manner to the masses all over the world. The film audience represents the largest conceivable community of people without social, racial or national barriers. This universality, combined with its emotional appeal, makes film the nearest approach to an international language we have yet found, and the most important vehicle of influence upon society.

That mass influence by which the cinema gains its singular importance evidently originates in its double character of an art and of an industry in all its technicalities of production and exploitation. It thus constitutes a novel phenomenon which may now be explained in terms of some figures to make the actual sphere of its influence more concrete.

According to the latest survey by the Department of Commerce in Washington, a total of 86,640 film theatres is scattered throughout the world. Their seating capacity is 38,353,678. (In 1940 the total of theatres was given as 67,997, so that in spite of the war the number has increased by 18,643 theatres). This is the present size of the world market for films with an estimated weekly attendance of 235 million.

Of these attendances an average of 100 million alone is accounted for by the 18,765 cinemas in the United States. This explains the international preponderance of the American film industry. Hollywood, the centre of American film production, can draw from a home market, the box-office takings of which were estimated at approximately 450 million pounds, excluding entertainment tax, in 1946. The investment in the American film trade represents approximately 651,119,101 pounds. Based on a home market and a capital investment of this size, the strong international position of the U.S. film industry is not surprising. The gross takings of American films throughout the world are estimated at approximately 675 million pounds, so that approximately 225 million pounds are receipts from exports to other countries. In fact, it is estimated that an average of at least 60 per cent of the world's screen time is occupied by U.S. films. In a number of countries, including Britain, the percentage is still higher.

* * * * *

Britain takes a particularly important place in American film exports. In the above-mentioned Washington survey the total of theatres in Europe in 1947 is given as 51,227. This figure includes the British cinemas which, on the strength of the latest British statistics, is 4,750, a figure which may in the meantime have increased. However, if we wish to assess Britain's place in the world film market we have to remember that with a total world population of 1,900 million, the number of weekly cinema attendances throughout the world is estimated at 235 million. With a total population of only some 43 million in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the weekly cinema attendances in this country are now estimated at roughly 35 million. This disproportionately high figure of British film attendances is conclusive evidence of the importance of the British film market, not least for American film interests. In terms of box-office returns it may be mentioned that entertainment tax receipts for the fiscal year 1946/47 amounted to 53,392,000 pounds. It is reckoned that 90 per cent of this came from the cinema box-offices. On this basis, the total cinema receipts in this country are estimated at approximately 110 million pounds per annum.

The question as to the number of films absorbed by this substantial market is answered in recent Board of Trade statistics. The number of films registered in the last quota year ending March 31st, 1947, was 474 full length features. Of this total 107 were British registered films, as against 83 in 1945/46 and 67 in 1944/45. These figures, although showing the rising trend of the British film must, however, be viewed in relation to the 367 films of foreign origin registered by the Board of Trade. These are almost entirely supplied and distributed by American companies.

Imagine for a moment that 80 per cent. of all stage performances given in Britain were imported from another

country, produced and enacted by its artists. Even with a sprinkling of English "guest artists" in the cast, you would find this situation somewhat baffling. You would feel the same way in respect of concerts or of book publications. Surely you are anxious to see foreign artistic efforts in this country and to compare them with your own national achievements. But you would never accept a situation in which four-fifths of your entertainment is imported from one particular country. As things are, 80 per cent. of British screen time is taken by Hollywood films.

The social and cultural aspect of this situation is even more significant than its financial and economic implications, essential as they are. The influence exerted by the film on the public mind cannot be better expressed than by the following further quotation from Sir Stafford Cripps's speech: "You cannot see films two or three times a week without such films having a very considerable influence upon your general outlook on life. This applies especially to those who are forced by circumstances to live within a narrow compass with no opportunities of travel or of contacting people from a wider sphere. Even within our own country we must remember that the vast majority of citizens never have the chance to move outside the narrow field of their own locality, and the films provide them with a window through which they can glimpse that greater world that lies beyond their own limited view. For this reason the films become a very potent influence in their lives, interpreting to them what they believe to be the habits, desires, passions of those other people whom they can never meet personally. Amongst the young, particularly, who are at an impressionable age, the films can have an influence for good or evil".

* * * * *

These problems are not confined to Britain alone. While in other fields of art every civilised nation has been able to develop its own music, dramatic art, literature, painting, architecture and so on, the conditions in the sphere of film art are largely different. Film, as we have seen, is an art and an industry at the same time. From the statistics already given it becomes clear that the pre-requisite of film making is the control of a complete industrial and technical machinery, including studios and laboratories, the employment of a variety of highly-skilled technicians, artists, craftsmen, administrative personnel and so forth. All of which represents vast capital investments.

While the indispensable financial structure of film making tended to favour the American film effort, other countries found it difficult, if not impossible, to make their contribution to the new predominantly international art. Yet, if we regard the film, as we undoubtedly do, as an artistic medium, then we must presume that every nation should have full opportunities of self expression through the screen, as it has had, down the centuries, through all the other arts. Hence the endeavour in many countries to encourage and to make secure their national film effort by a variety of legislative measures. They differ widely, ranging from the state film monopoly of Czechoslovakia to the protective British quota system. In almost all film producing countries we find legislative measures in different forms in order to provide possibilities for its film effort and to secure for its production a proportion of its home market as well as a fair chance of exhibition in foreign markets. For it should be understood that film production of any higher standard of quality can *pay only by exports*.

This again is an essential point which goes far beyond commercial considerations. The future progress of the film as an art, and of the cinema as a medium of peaceful understanding largely depends upon the exchange of the best films from one country to another. Here, in fact, is the very *mission* of the cinema. "It is"—to quote Sir Stafford Cripps once more—"more important than ever that the peoples of the world should get to know each other, that they should understand how their neighbours live, what are their difficulties, their desires and, indeed, what are the fears of the different nations. It becomes of extreme importance that we should use every means at our disposal of giving people that sympathetic, mutual understanding which is the only basis for true and lasting friendship. Literature is one of these vehicles, but even more effective is the film".

* * * * *

At the present phase, and particularly with the international situation in mind, every means of encouraging as many national film productions as possible and of bringing them to other countries appears indispensable if the cinema is to help to better international understanding. This is the essential meaning of such devices as the British film quota. It is not a matter of "free trade" or "freedom of information". It is more than a matter of temporary currency and trade considerations. It is a cultural not a commercial issue of the first order. As such it is certainly not a party political issue, or a question of state interference or private enterprise.

As a cultural issue of the broadest national and international implication it carries with it a democratic challenge, a challenge to the Demos, the people.

If the cinema is to make a real contribution to the progress of mankind, films made for international exchange should represent the highest and the best of which the producing country is capable, and the people, the audience of the cinema, should be prepared to accept such films. A thought-provoking contribution to this essential point was recently made in the "Middlesex County Times", appropriately headed *Democratic Discrimination*:

"Two thrilling but contrasted experiences last Saturday set me reflecting what ought to be the objective of those who will cater for young people's lengthened educational life. In the afternoon I saw the League leaders humbled by Brentford in a mood I hope may be repeated in to-day's cup-tie: in the evening I saw *La Symphonie Pastorale*, the screen version of a Gide story which is probably the best film now showing in London. What, however, would most of the 34,000 people who relished the finer points of the former spectacle have thought of the latter! Association football is an answer to those who say the multitude cannot be taught to discriminate. The function of education should be to make it equally discriminating in other directions".

It is encouraging to read suggestions of this kind in the press. Actually, something more than quota legislation, indispensable as it is, will be required. Audiences, not only in this but in every country, should learn to appreciate real values in the new people's art. They should be trained to free themselves from a phoney, commercial publicity. In view of the tremendous influence of the cinema, film appreciation should be taught generally and systematically in this country—and everywhere. This should be realised by those responsible for future film policy.

THE CAMBRIDGE EDUCATIONAL FILM COUNCIL

An account of the beginning of an experiment which may prove of vital importance as regards the use of visual aids in Further Education.

By

STANLEY OREANU

In the heart of last winter, when inspiration was at a low ebb and coal production the chief topic of conversation even in the most academic circles, a number of dons and undergraduates met in an elegant music room in Cambridge to discuss the use of films at the University. To this meeting were invited representatives of the British Film Institute and the Federation of Documentary Film Units so that what was academically desirable might be related to what could be done in practice. The result of the discussion was the formation of the Cambridge University Educational Film Council "to promote the use of films in higher education and for the purpose of academic research".

This organisation, while remaining unofficial, has won the support of several professors and other people of influence, and a number of university departments have taken up membership.

The Executive Committee of the Council realised as soon as it was elected that it had taken on a very big job. A good deal is now being done to encourage visual education at schools and to produce suitable films, though there is still a considerable shortage in every subject. At university level, however, there is a very great shortage of films covering every subject, with the possible exception of medicine, and a general unawareness among both students and staffs of the extent to which films could be used.

As far as most non-scientific subjects are concerned, it is often claimed that there is no place for films in university teaching. Since, however, it is through our visual sense that we are most keenly aware of our environment and "seeing is believing", the way through the eyes to the mind should not be so lightly neglected.

Of course it may be that in certain subjects there is no use for teaching-films, and in other subjects where the use is obvious, as in the teaching of languages, in which sounds could be related to objects, it is not easy to see just how the subject matter should be presented.

The scope of visual education and the methods to be used could be best determined by planned research on the part of individual faculties and psychological laboratories.

To carry out production for this research and for actual use there is a great need for a film centre at each university, equipped for making simple sound and silent films with animated diagrams where necessary.

The establishment of a University Film Centre "with adequate facilities for the production, projection and storage of films" is the "ultimate" aim of the C.U. Educational Film Council. The word "ultimate" does not imply the end of the Council, for it may then be able to turn its attention to the wider problems of the use of the film as a means of expression, a subject on which academic research might profitably be undertaken from the points of view of the psychologist and sociologist. There might also be some entertaining results if philologists got to work on the talkies.

This, however, is away in the future, and at the beginning of last spring when the floods were about to occur even in Cambridge, where the malaises of the world and a consequent sense of urgency in dealing with problems have been spreading in recent years, it was felt that something practical should be done at once and of necessity on limited funds to promote the use of films for teaching and research.

The Council therefore set up an information panel whose secretary very quickly (considering the size of the task) collected as complete as possible a list of sources in this country from which films of probable educational value could be obtained. Copies of this list have been sent to all members of the Council. A good deal of other information has been collected and filed and is available to any member of the University who cares to ask for it.

A technical panel was also established to provide advice to departments wanting to make or project films and to arrange for the loan or hire of equipment. The secretary of this panel is now responsible (through the Engineering Laboratory) to the University for the purchase and maintenance of its film equipment. A number of 16 and 35 mm. cameras and projectors have recently been purchased and it is rumoured that even a sound movieola is on the way.

It should be mentioned that various departments at the University already own 16 and 35 mm. projectors, and films are shown regularly in a few courses; for example in engineering and certain aspects of biology.

A report on the use of films in the many faculties and departments at Cambridge (prepared at the request of the Federation of Documentary Film Units) has been sent to enquirers from other universities; and a memorandum describing a step-by-step scheme for the provision of

cinematograph facilities at Cambridge has been submitted to the authorities. The work of the Council has been widely publicised among teachers at the University

The test of all this paper work will be whether films are used to an increasing extent and with greater understanding at Cambridge. It is as yet too early to make such a claim.

Success at Cambridge depends on an extension of visual education elsewhere and on the exchange of films, ideas, and the results of experience with other universities in this country and abroad. To this end the Council corresponded with the Counsellor for Films in U.N.E.S.C.O., who undertook to supply information about developments in other countries so far as he was aware of them. Many personal contacts have also been informed of the existence and work of the Council.

But this is not enough. The Council believes that a University Film Council is needed to co-ordinate developments in different universities. If there were such a permanent organisation:

1. A scheme for appraising films as to suitability for higher education could be worked out and put into practice.

2. The burden of producing more elaborate films could be shared. Thus two universities might want to produce similar films each of which would be fairly expensive to make, so that without a central advisory body it is possible that either two films would be made at wasted expense or none at all.

3. A university department in say Paris or Upsala wanting to know whether a film on a particular subject was available in Britain would not then have to write to numerous professors and secretaries of faculties. The advantage to this country if there were similar organisations abroad is obvious.

4. There could be effective liaison between academic bodies and film producers. The economic distribution of professionally made films for university teaching is a tough problem because of the smallness of the market. There are, however, a number of films made for general interest or for instructing special groups which could with small alterations and little extra cost be made suitable for use in higher education. It will be remembered that G.B. Instructional Ltd. have in the past issued films with serious

and popular commentaries. Films might also be used to illustrate books.

The Education Department of the Cambridge University Press has been experimenting recently with the use of a short film as illustration to a mathematical text-book. The Department hopes to carry out further experiments of this kind which have interesting possibilities.

To provide an opportunity for discussing the whole problem of the use of films in universities, the Council put forward the suggestion of a National Conference to The British Film Institute and the Scientific Film Association. These bodies have agreed to convene such a conference jointly, and it is to take place in London this November. Representatives from all universities and university colleges in the United Kingdom have been invited. It is hoped that the result of the conference will be to agree to set up a Universities Film Council.

If such an organisation comes into being it will be a big step forward, but if this is to be a live body, there must be internal developments in other universities, and also in technical, agricultural and teachers' training colleges, etc.

To those who have the desire and opportunity to speed this progress, it should be pointed out that, although from the remarks at the beginning of the article it may seem that the formation of an Educational Film Council at Cambridge was a happy New Year inspiration, in hard fact plans had also to be laid and campaigns carried out in the dog days.

In the summer of 1946 a series of shows were held to illustrate what had already been done in the way of visual education at Cambridge and elsewhere. It was this and other activity on the part of an informal committee that made possible the formation of an active council.

At the present time, when we are desperately short of university graduates, anything which may improve the quality of higher education is not to be thought of as a luxury for the future. It is possible that the enthusiasts have much exaggerated the importance of visual education, but it is also possible that the student of coming years will have through the use of films, not a host of new facts to hand, but a far greater imaginative grasp of his subject.

MERSEYSIDE AND NORWICH

Merseyside Film Institute Society

Season 1946-1947

The close of the very active 1946-7 season found the Society with the highest membership figure yet reached—1,590. In addition to its regular monthly film programmes at the Philharmonic Hall, the Society has continued with its successful Sunday afternoon repertory shows of the older classics, and on 16 mm. it showed *Dr. Caligari* and *Birth of a Nation*, the latter with a special pianoforte accompaniment.

Two special children's matinees were again arranged at Christmas and Easter, and the usual end-of-term shows for school parties were presented, at one of which Dr. Roger Manvell spoke to the scholars.

Practical aid and encouragement has been given to numerous organisations in arranging 16 mm. shows, and two of the Philharmonic programmes raised a total £186 for charity. Talks have been given by Charles Frend, Michael Powell, and the Liverpool Playhouse Producer, John Fernald.

Despite the ever-increasing difficulties of obtaining first-rate films from abroad, the Society with its large and loyal membership look forward to a successful season.

Plans include the continuance of shows at the Philharmonic and the Tatler, and talks by film specialists. Films already booked are, *La Femme du Boulanger*, *Frenzy*, *Cage aux Rossignols*.

The present satisfactory position and prestige of the Society will make possible a considerable expansion in the range of its activities, in the future.

Norwich Film Society

During the Ninth Session the Workers' Educational Association sponsored an excellent lecture by M. Pierre Lefevre on the French Tradition in Acting in connection with the Society's showing of *Une femme disparaît*. *Donald Duck and the Gorilla* was shown in June in addition to the films previously advertised.

The programmes of the Tenth Session are as follows. Sept. 21st: *Le Quai des Brumes*, *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Suite Française*, *Abu in the Dungeon*. Oct. 19th: *La Cage aux Rossignols*, *Musical Instruments of India*, *La Bottega della Melodie*, *Chasing the Blues*. November 16th: *L'Atalante*, *Sand and Life*, *Monkey into Man*.

THE PLANNING OF AN EDUCATIONAL FILM PROGRAMME

By

DONALD A. MACKENZIE, M.C., M.A.

Principal, Education Division, Gaumont-British Instructional Ltd.

THOSE WHO ARE INTERESTED in the development of visual education should know that for film producers the first question to be answered after the war was not "What subjects shall we plan for our new programmes of classroom films?" There was a far more serious question to be answered first, one which, if it had been answered in the negative, would have gravely affected all that is now being done to get films into the classroom. It was this:

"Are we going to make any more educational films at all?"

G.B. Instructional had greater need to ask that question than any other producing company, for they alone had in 1933 backed their faith in the coming of visual education by ear-marking a vast sum of money for the production of more than 250 classroom films to cover the main subjects of the curriculum, while G.B. Equipments had invested large sums in designing and marketing school projectors.

With what result?

By 1939, when the war switched both companies from the school to the camp, the number of projectors installed in classrooms was still derisory. Not one teacher in a hundred had seen, let alone used, a single school film.

Thousands of projectors were made during the war, but not one of them went into the schools. The training camps engulfed them all. Are you surprised therefore that after the war producers said "What is the use of returning to this utterly unprofitable business of making films for teachers who cannot get projectors? Who would have made shells if there were no guns? Who would make cars if there were no roads?"

The galling thing was that G.B. Instructional, who had for ten years pioneered the research into the possibilities of the film in education, had seen their faith triumphantly justified in the instruction of the Forces through this medium. And they knew that the men and women joining or returning to the teaching profession had proved for themselves how films eased and quickened their grasp of a subject, and that what it had done for them it could do for children.

What then were the producers to do?

After months of examining ways and means, during which strong representations were made by the industry to the Ministry for the installation of projectors on a progressive scale over a period of years, G.B. Instructional took the plunge. Though there was still no sign from Whitehall they decided that public educational opinion would eventually demand the recognition of the need for visual aids for the teacher, and by a second act of faith a great long-term programme of classroom films was planned and the first groups put into production.

We are glad now, in the light of what the Ministry and the Local Education Authorities are doing, that we had the courage of our convictions. Whatever the two new Committees succeed in accomplishing—and none can appreciate their difficulties better than G.B. Instructional—the establishment of these bodies is an official Declaration of Faith in the wisdom of exploiting (in the best sense of that word) the visual imagination and memory of the young.

Right—we decided to resume production. What films should we produce? What should be our guiding principle? Three factors had to be taken into consideration:

1. Hundreds of classroom films were crying out to be made.
2. They take a very long time to produce in these post-war years of restrictions and shortages of materials, labour, studio space, etc.
3. They cost a great deal to make.

We decided therefore that we would make no film of a subject that could be put over to a class *through any other medium whatsoever.*

FIELD NOT NARROW

Later perhaps we might relax the rule, but in the first few years we must concentrate on those films which enable the teacher to do what he cannot do so well through any other medium. In any case these are the films that will be in the greatest demand, and unless the post-war films are widely bought or hired, no firm can afford to go on making them. (That is why we insist that until projectors are installed on a progressive scale in schools, the work of the two new official committees cannot come to fruition.)

At first sight our inflexible rule seems to cut out so many classroom topics that the scope for production is perilously narrowed. But as you explore the field you find it is not so. In Biology and Geography alone there are enough subjects to keep the producer busy for a long time, and though it is our desire to help the teacher at as many points of the curriculum as possible, I am inclined to think that the various aspects of biology and geography will remain for a time the largest sections of educational film catalogues, followed fairly closely by technology and the industrial applications of science.

Micro-cinematography, with its powers of magnification and of speeding up processes and movements, places a tool in the hands of the teacher of Zoology and Botany for which there is no adequate substitute. For one thing the cinema-projector can begin where the microscope leaves off, and the whole class can see the vastly enlarged image at one time, instead of queuing for a short glimpse through the microscope. The tiniest forms of animal and vegetable life can be studied in gigantic close-ups, and days and weeks of growth can be observed by the class in a few minutes, thanks to the ability of the film camera to speed up processes as much as 30,000 times. How successful such presentations can be is shown in such films as *Roots* and *Seed Dispersal*, made for G.B.I. by that camera genius, Percy Smith.

THE EARTH'S CRUST

Geography lessons are full of material for which the film is the best medium. The finest static illustrations cannot reinforce the word-pictures of the teacher in describing *Life in Other Lands* as can the moving images of the screen. And when, as in a good sound film, the natural sounds of the farm, the busy thoroughfares, bazaars, schools and above all homes come with the pictures into the classroom, an impression is created of authentic atmosphere which no other medium can provide.

Nor is it only of other lands that this is true. The countryside can come to town. The urban child can without leaving his classroom visit a farm 100 miles away; and the rural child can experience the bustling life of an industrial centre. And even within the limits of one city, the children may, by means of a ten-minute film, visit the local undertakings, and thus save for the teacher the hours involved in planning and conducting a school journey.

In mathematical and physical geography the animated diagram film gives teachers quite indispensable help in putting over conceptions which the ablest of them find baffling. Only those who have had to teach the *How and Why of Day and Night*, still worse the *Seasons*, know how difficult it is to make intelligible the phenomena resulting from the rotation of the globe. How simple these concepts can be made is shown in the new G.B.I. film *Latitude and Longitude*. If the teaching of this difficult subject had not been clear, despite its brevity (8½ minutes), this

film would not have received the award of the International Festival at Brussels for the best teaching film.

Or take the movements of the earth's crust, the effect of inner forces on the constitution and form of land masses, which have determined the landscape of to-day. The dynamic character of volcanoes, the upthrust of rocks, the formation of folded mountains and rift valleys—all these are kinetic subjects demanding (and now receiving) animated diagram treatment.

This is also the ideal method of teaching and illustrating certain aspects of mechanics and explaining the working of machines, especially those units which are hidden behind casing. Moving diagram can also reveal to a class studying, for example, the industrial applications of Chemistry, the interior design and working of factory plant, the huge retorts, etc. that even a school visit cannot penetrate.

EXPERTS DISAGREE

If I had space I could mention other subjects, including Mathematics and the thorny question of History films, but enough has been said to show that within the limits fixed by our self-imposed rule there is plenty of material for which the teacher is waiting. Not one of the lessons mentioned above could be given or illustrated nearly so effectively without the aid of a well-planned film.

As you will have gathered, the research into the films we must not make gave us at the same time pretty clear indications as to the subjects on which we *should* concentrate. The next question (from Donald Carter, our production chief) was: Which first? We aim at an ultimate output of fifty classroom films a year. Good—which should be the first fifty? They must be the subjects likely to be most urgently wanted by the largest possible number of teachers. Otherwise they would not be bought or hired in sufficient quantity to justify the steady expansion of our catalogue.

And here I made a mistake. I asked four classroom experts who had taught in many types of school and of whom two had experience of teaching by film, to draw up (independently) a list of the fifty titles likely to be in the greatest demand. Result: admirable lists; in some cases treatments, even scripts, sketched out in considerable detail. But there was hardly any overlap—no consensus of opinion. People told me that I might have known that, with so many films desperately needing to be made. They were right.

So we began again: Which were the lessons common to the largest number of syllabuses? If we could get schemes of work from all types of school, we could take a sort of H.C.F. and that would be some guide. Over many years as teacher, educational administrator, editor of a teacher's journal and designer of educational text-books, I have made many friends among the most progressive workers in all these fields. I wrote to them all and explained our problem. The result was, I was privileged to study a very large selection of syllabuses.

While these were being collated we worked out a complete chart of the knowledge a pupil might be presumed to have had some *chance* of acquiring during a normal school life. We got the aforesaid experts and subject specialists to vet. and tidy up the many branching subdivisions of this digest. The chart grew downwards and outwards, and in its finished form looks very like a huge genealogical tree. It shows the field of knowledge broken down from the general to the particular, so that the lowest tendrils (or perhaps root-hairs) contain the actual lessons likely to be given by the teacher.

BUT SYLLABUSES AGREE

When the chart and the collation of actual schemes of work were completed, two exciting things emerged:

1. There is a large number of "lessons" common to most syllabuses.
2. They were represented to an extraordinary degree in the units of knowledge along the lower reaches of the chart—the simple things from which all mental explorations and extensions of knowledge must stem.

Having taken the H.C.F. of the schemes of work and related the list to the chart, it was comparatively easy to choose fifty subjects to which teachers would give a worth-while welcome. And not only teachers in Britain, but throughout the world, for with the exception perhaps of the Elementary Citizenship group,

most of the subjects deal with knowledge which every child in the world needs to possess—a serious dealing with the earth he lives on and the effect upon his everyday life of the phenomena resulting from its rotation and its relation to the solar system; a group on the working of his body; studies on various aspects of Biology—the essentials of living and non-living matter and the filling of other gaps in the extensive Biology section of our existing catalogue; a series covering the world products on which man relies for food, clothing and shelter; a Citizenship group whose popular title might be "How My Town is Run"; and a companion film to the G.B.I. two-reeler on the Mediaeval Village. This deals with the Mediaeval Monastery and avoids the costly reconstruction method by basing itself on the actual life of the monks of Buckfast Abbey to-day.

We hope the teachers' reactions to these first fifty films will provide some basic pointers for all our future productions. For though we consider the exposition of these films could not be more clearly or concisely stated we do not intend our theories to harden into a formula. Time and the teachers' use of the films will tell us what alterations and modifications of treatment (if any) are called for in our future productions.

In making these films we find static material which it would be waste of moving film to include and yet which is important for a proper understanding of the subject. Such material gives us a sound *raison d'être* for the production of film strips. Strips will accompany many of our new films, and in time such of the existing films as need them. They will, however, be so designed that they can be used either independently or in conjunction with the films.

THE "VISUAL UNIT"

In one case already we have made a strip *instead* of a film. When we planned the series based on the Rotation of the Globe, "Longitude and Time" was to follow "Latitude and Longitude". It soon became apparent, however, that most of the teaching points would be better illustrated by a film strip, and the film treatment was abandoned.

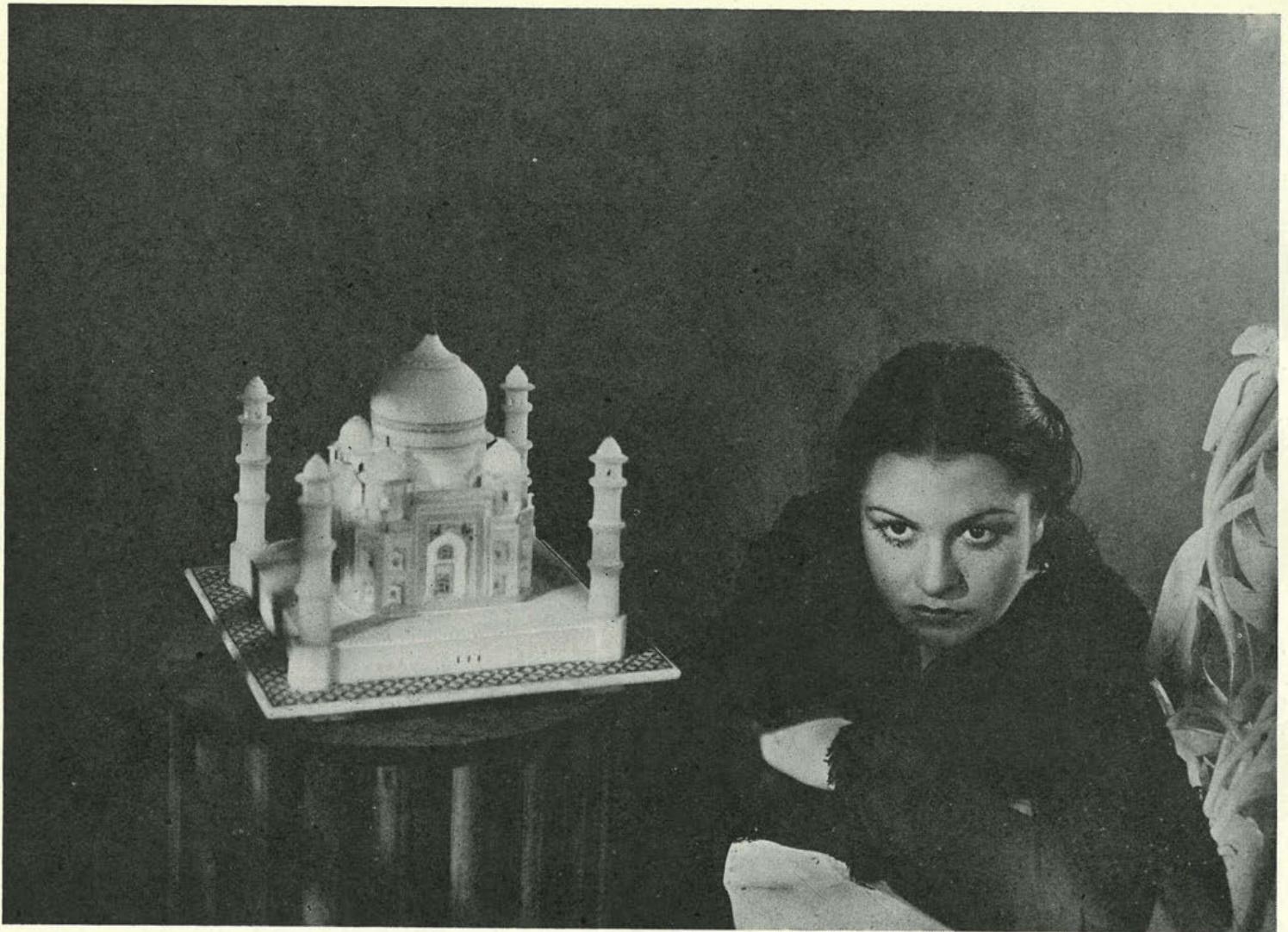
This seems to me a more satisfying reason for making film strips than a blind adherence to the idea that there must be a "complete visual unit" for every subject covered. This phrase is well on its way to joining the jargon of obscure terminology in which word-spinning theorists of the visual education movement are losing us and perhaps themselves. There has not been enough research to prove that for the proper understanding of a subject there must be films and film strips plus wall-charts cum desk-card "stills" as well as the printed book and the spoken word-picture.

Let us rather say that so long as many schools have no film projector, others no film strip projector and many have neither, the producer should provide the various types of visual material so designed that each can be used independently or all of them as a combined visual unit. It is for this reason that G.B.I. are making film strips based on the films and on other subjects not covered by films. And for schools that have no projector we are providing wall-charts based again on our films and on other subjects for which films are not available.

Such then are the main lines of one company's production plan. But we realise that it must be kept flexible. If a chance that cannot be repeated arises to make a badly wanted film, Donald Carter will make it out of turn. If circumstances deny us shooting facilities on one film, we shall choose another. We must also be ready to co-operate when we can with the plans of the two new official Committees.

These Committees have wisely arranged that whoever makes these films for the schools must have the best possible advice from those for whom they are designed, i.e., the teachers. This stipulation is already being met by my company at every stage from script to screen, but we shall welcome any help from the teacher panels of the National Committee, for of all the problems encountered by school film producers there is none more difficult than finding a team of teachers who are not only authorities on teaching methods but who have real experience of using classroom films. It is not surprising: what chance have the teachers as a whole had of gaining such knowledge?

There are now signs, however, that the one further thing needful to get the wheels of visual education turning—that is, the progressive installation of projectors in the schools on a nation-wide scale—is being tackled at the highest level. Our good wishes go with the two Committees in all their efforts. We know (none better) the difficulties with which they are grappling.



Flowers

A NEW INDIAN FILM

Nellore Films

THE QUARTER'S READING

Reviewed by RUTH PARTINGTON, MARGARET SIMPSON,
M. E. COHEN *and others*

Léon Moussinac. *L'Age Ingrat du Cinema*. (Paris, Sagittaire, 1946.)

It is almost surprising to find topical relevance and lasting truth in a book of re-published criticism, written between 1920 and 1945, which mentions René Clair in a footnote as a promising young filmmaker, and dismisses the English film in a world-wide view of cinema achievement in two sentences: "England has never produced a truly English film. It is re-organising its cinema industry under the direction of the great American firms". Yet the present crisis in the relations of English and American film production confirms the truth of the economic basis of film, the inter-relation of industry and art, themes often repeated in Moussinac's book.

The whole book is a curious mixture of fundamental theory and contemporary comment on film, so that some parts date more than others. But all is the work of a pioneer critic and active devotee of cinema, and the decision to leave intact these texts written from 1920 onwards seems wise as well as courageous. The book is not a straightforward history or criticism of the cinema: it expresses an opinion and a theory, and has an incidental historical character in quoting examples from films over this period, 1920-1945.

The approach to the subject varies in this collection of essays between technical and theoretical extremes with intermediary chapters of film criticism and history. This special character of a compilation of writing over a long period of swift develop-

ment gives interest and at the same time limitations. Comments on national cinema must always be considered in relation to the date of writing. Their subject-matter is sometimes accessible with difficulty and this must limit appreciation of Moussinac's opinion—for instance, on the work of the French *avantgarde* or of Ince and Griffiths.

The ignorance and prejudice existing at the time of his study of the Soviet cinema at first hand in 1928 are now largely dispelled, but information on its organisation is still valuable, as is the reminder of the need for a slow pace in making films for a peasant audience, and critical comments on its cinéastes are still interesting. "A film of Eisenstein's is like a cry, a film of Poudovkine's evokes a song".

Closely connected with the writer's admiration of the planned programme and freedom from commercial pressure of the Soviet cinema is his reiterated theme of the economic influence of society on cinema. At the same time he has an idealistic conception of film as a new art with its special "photogenic" quality of revealing the poetry of life, and its need of rhythm and composition. He asserts "The cinema is an art and the cinema industry is no more to this art than the book industry is to literature", and claims cinema for the modern mass as a communal expression of faith comparable to Greek tragedy or medieval cathedral.

The central message of "Cinema Social Expression", 1927, that cinema must be saved from the domination of money by a socialist economy is implied throughout the book that concludes: "I repeat myself one last time: the cinema, in its fully-developed form, will speak for human unity. It was born for that". The writer, a pioneer, is thus consistent in proclaiming a social function and a possible ideal status of the cinema which is now passing through its "difficult age".

RUTH PARTINGTON

Audio-Visual Methods in Teaching, by Edgar Dale. (New York, Dryden Press, 1946, 4 dollars 25 cents, George G. Harrap in London).

The wording of the title suggests, quite correctly, that this is an American work; Professor Dale holds important educational posts at the Ohio State University and here gives us a summary of current theory and practical methods in the use of audio-visual aids for education. It is interesting to find that thought and practice of American teachers have been developing along lines similar to those which have been evinced in progressive British schools for many years. A body of experienced British educationists would find in the examples given from American schools parallels to their own experimental work and methods of using audio-visual material.

The term "audio-visual material" is widely interpreted to include dramatisation, school visits and field work in addition to the more obvious forms, such as pictures, films, filmstrips, slides, models, maps, radio and records. In passing, one might say that it is rather disappointing that so little attention is paid to the educative and cultural importance of music and to its application in such subjects as physical training. The whole topic of visual material is dealt with with great enthusiasm, and the pedagogic problems are approached with a sympathy which shows a fundamental understanding of the teacher's difficulties. The methods and material are, however, often described with a naivety which is surprising, though this is offset by some shrewd questions which are provocative and stimulating. One would have expected that a book dealing with visual material would itself provide examples of first class material and its correct use; but some of the pictures in the book are not well chosen and the reproduction is poor, so that their points cannot be appreciated. The text and illustrations are not closely integrated;

if the final test is applied, namely, "Does the letterpress make sense if the pictures are removed?", the answer would be, "The larger part is perfectly intelligible", thus showing that the illustrations have not been used to their full advantage.

Very strong disagreement can be advanced by specialists and technicians to some of the statements and suggestions and would indeed cause a reluctance to recommend this book for use by students and inexperienced teachers without considerable discussion of the relative values of different sections with those who are subject specialists as well as educationists. If this danger is understood, considerable benefit could be derived from the book and from the contact with a lively mind, which seeks to make Education a part of the organic process of living.

MARGARET SIMPSON

The Last Chance, by Richard Schweizer, translated from the German by Lord Sudley. (Secker and Warburg, 1947. 7s. 6d.)

Richard Schweizer first wrote the story in the form of a film script. He then made his own script into a novel, which has now been translated into English. The use of the present tense and the first person help to retain some of the vividness of the film. It is illustrated by eight reproductions of stills from the film.

Les Soirees de L'O.F.D.A. (Lyon, Penser Vrai, 175 frs. for 12 numbers, post free.)

L'Office Familial de Documentation Artistique is bringing out a series of pamphlets on various films. They are not intended to summarise the films but to give an analysis of each from the artistic, technical, psychological and moral point of view. The credits are given and they are illustrated by reproductions of stills. The following have already appeared: *Le carrefour des enfants perdus*, *Le bal des passants*, *Pamela*, *La cage aux rossignols*, *Bifur 3*, *PH contre Gestapo*, *L'invite de 11eme heure*, *Untel pere et fils*, *Au petit bonheur*, *Le pelerin de l'enfer*.

En Route pour Paris: An Illustrated Story of a Visit to Paris, by W. B. P. Aspinall, R. P. L. Ledesert and N. S. Peppard. (Harrap, 1947. 2s. 6d.)

Although this book can be used by itself as a reader, its main purpose is for use in conjunction with the four corresponding film strips of the same title prepared by the School Aids Department of the *Daily Mail*, price £1 5s. 6d.

Made for Millions: A Critical Study of the New Media of Information and Entertainment, edited by Frederick Laws. (Contact Publications, 1947. 10s. net.)

As Mr. Laws writes, the intention of this book is to investigate the situation in which artist and audience find themselves to-day as a result of the inventions which have revolutionised the means of publishing information and works of art. It describes the context in which work of quality can be attempted in the new media and in each of them a most important condition is the size of the audience. There are

two contributions on the film, one by G. W. Stonier, the other by Adrian Brunel. Mr. Stonier believes that it is inevitable that artistic standards should decline as the technique of reproduction improves; he does consider, however, that the cinema-habit will eventually have had its day and foresees for music, drama and documentaries a small and well-defined place among the arts. Mr. Brunel draws attention to the handicaps of the monopolistic trend in films and of an out-moded censorship and to the importance of the sub-standard film. He puts in a plea for an independent League of Cinema Goers, which would attempt to get a proportion of the films they wanted instead of the "Lowest Common Denominator" film. Much of what is said by both these contributors and also by Frederick Laws on the radio, by Ralph Hill on radio music, by Grace Wyndham-Goldie on television, by Henry Durant on the press, by Denys Thompson on advertising and by Margaret Cole on books, is open to argument, but it shows a good deal of original thought. As an appendix, there is a list of films shown between 1919 and 1939 which marked an advance in technique, films which were universally popular and typical of their period and films which have introduced a new genre. The book is illustrated by excellent reproductions of photographs and stills.

La Belle et La Bête: Journal d'un Film, by Jean Cocteau. (Paris, J. B. Janin, 1946.)

This interesting journal, kept from day to day, describes how the author, during the shooting of the film *La Belle et la Bête*, in Touraine, at Raray, Epinay and Saint Maurice, directed the film under such difficulties as the necessity for economy, rapid variations of weather, the drone of aeroplanes, illness and cuts in electricity. One sees how these difficulties were met with humour, perseverance and singleness of purpose and obtains some insight into the way Cocteau's ideas were conceived and carried out by himself and with the loyal co-operation of his team of actors and technicians. The book is illustrated by twenty-five reproductions of photographs and stills from the film.

School Broadcasting in Britain, by Richard Palmer. (British Broadcasting Corporation, 1947, 3s. 6d.)

This book, which is the first considerable contribution on the subject to be published, has an introduction by Sir Henry Richards, Chairman of the Central Council for School Broadcasting, and a chapter by Mary Somerville on how school broadcasting grew up. There are also chapters on what broadcasting can give and on school broadcasting from the studio end and from the listening end. The rest of the book is mainly devoted to surveys of the broadcasting of various specific school subjects. It is plentifully illustrated by reproductions of photographs. We welcome the appearance of this book and should like to take this opportunity of stating that the British Film Institute would always be pleased to answer questions with regard to films suitable to accompany broadcasts to schools.

Cinema: the Magazine for Discriminating Movie-Goers. (Hollywood; monthly; annual subscription 2 dollars 50 cents, foreign 3 dollars 50 cents).

This periodical, of which the first number appeared in June, is nicely produced and well illustrated. The articles are interesting and out of the common run, many of them contributed by authorities on the subject.

The Public's Progress. (Contact Publications, 1947, 5/-).

This Contact Publication contains good popular articles on the Progress of the Factual Film, by two of the best known authorities on the factual film. Basil Wright writes on Grierson the Pioneer, Paul Rotha on The Future Outlook.

British Film Yearbook, 1947-48, edited by Peter Noble. (Skelton Robinson, 1947, 21/-).

This edition of the British Film Yearbook still contains the biographical index, the list of British film producing companies and studios and the documentary releases, brought up to date. In addition, however, it includes a list of distributors, cast lists and credits of feature releases for 1946, a 16mm. reference section and useful lists of personnel in the industry and forthcoming film productions. This year about half the book is composed of more than twenty articles on various subjects connected with the film industry by well known authorities. Although published at the same price, it contains a hundred pages more than its predecessor, which is pleasant, but some of the innovations do not seem altogether successful: for example, the coloured title page appears pointless when it is preceded by one of the usual type, the advertisements on art paper, interleaved with the text, are irritating, when one is expecting more reproductions of stills, and the type used at the foot of the reproductions themselves seems unnecessarily large.

Material for Visual Education, by Betty M. B. Harris. (Daily Mail School-Aid Department, 1947, 2/6d.).

This report, which is a publication of the Film Council of the South West and edited and prefaced by G. Patrick Meredith, only purports to be a first survey and not a comprehensive catalogue, but the lack hitherto of any full list of sources has been a serious obstacle and the object of this survey is to show teachers that "at the cost of a few twopenny-halfpenny stamps they may be able to track down" the particular picture or specimen they want for their particular work. Materials are doubly classified under types of material and sources of material. The book contains a list of film catalogues, of organizations, a section devoted to miscellaneous information, a list of addresses and a bibliography.

Histoire Economique du Cinema, by Peter Bächlin. (Paris, Nouvelle Edition, 1947.)

This book is a translation into French of *Der Film als Ware*, already reviewed in the winter number of SIGHT AND SOUND, 1946-7. The translation is by De Muller-Strauss, who has also added an introduction.

The World is my Cinema, by E. W. and W. W. Robson. (Sidneyan Society, 1947. 12s. 6d.)

It is difficult to assess what axe, if any, is being ground in this book. The authors seem to have a down on trends in films in general, but particularly those in British films. They appear to lack a sense of proportion in this respect and often to read into issues cited from various films meanings which were probably never intended, perhaps not even apprehended.

Documentary 47. (Edinburgh, Albyn Press, 1947. 2s. 6d.)

This pamphlet, which was published on the occasion of the First International Festival of Documentary Films in Edinburgh, August 31st-September 7th of this year, is chiefly devoted to reviews of films shown there. It is, however, prefaced by an extremely interesting article by John Grierson, "A Time for Enquiry", in which he discusses the present position of the documentary in this country and suggests the preparation of a report by a Commission and the sort of questions this Commission should consider.

Penguin Film Review, 3. (Penguin Books, August, 1947. 1s.)

This number includes articles on "Expressionism and Realism in Films", by John Gassner; "Woman and the Film", by E. Arnot Robertson; "Trade Unionism in the British Film Industry", by George H. Elvin; "The Three Periods of the Czechoslovak Cinema", by Jindrich Brichta; and "Stereoscopy", by R. K. Neilson Baxter. It contains, as usual, a large number of stills which, unfortunately, are badly reproduced.

The Czechoslovak Nationalized Film Industry. (Prague, 1947.)

This interesting pamphlet gives an account of the organization of the Czechoslovak Nationalized Film Industry in all its branches. It conveys in a modest way some idea of the amount of original thought and of pioneer work involved, and of enormous difficulties overcome in the formation and execution of the enterprise.

Annual Report of the Advisory Council on Children's Entertainment Films, 1946; Entertainment Films for Children, 1947.

We have received copies of these two publications, which are complementary to one another. One can obtain from them a good idea of the progress made and the hard work carried out by the Advisory Council and the staff of Children's Entertainment Films. The annual report is the first to be issued and has been delayed, but it hoped that the report for 1947 will appear early in 1948, and that this will bring the record of the work of the Council up to date.

L'Encyclique de Sa Saintete le Pape Pie XI sur le Cinema, "Vigilanti Cura", 1936. (Lyon, Penser Vrai, 1946.)

This pamphlet contains, on its tenth anniversary, the Pope's Encyclical, reprinted with a commentary by M. l'Abbé

Chassagne, Secretary General of the Centrale Catholique du Cinema et de la Radio in Paris, which includes a good deal of information about the work of the various Catholic cinema organizations.

Kulturfilm-Almanach. (Kufstein, Amt für Kunst und Wissenschaft, 1947.)

This well-produced publication was issued on the occasion of the first Austrian cultural film week, which took place at Kufstein from 10th to 16th August, 1947. It contains articles by various authorities on the cultural film in Austria and the hope is expressed that this type of film may be an important factor in the reconstruction of that country. There are a large number of stills reproduced in sepia from Austrian cultural films and a list of Austrian producers of cultural films is appended.

Film Monthly Review. (Precinct Publications, 9d. per copy.)

This is another film periodical helping to swell the large quantity of those at present being issued. It is now being published in an enlarged form. Some of its material seems commonplace and the illustrations blurred. On the other hand there are several articles which appear to cater for a more intelligent public.

Cinema Parade, by John H. Bird. (Birmingham, Cornish, 1947. 16s.)

Miscellaneous and fascinating essays on the early days of the film shows, and before. These are hung around the personality of Waller Jeffs, an early Midlands exhibitor and a friend of the author, whose tribute this is. In a way this central preoccupation detracts from the book's general interest. There are probably few people as interested in reminiscences of exhibition as in those of production or the films themselves, or able to accept such a large share of attention being given to Birmingham. Certainly there seems no logical reason for a page of portraits to contain, without comment, Rudolph Valentino, Ramon Navarro and Waller Jeffs.

R. L.

Chestnuts in her Lap, by C. A. Lejeune. (Phoenix House, 1947. 10s. 6d.)

This book contains a collection of the reviews and film articles written by Miss Lejeune for the *Observer* during the last ten years. She writes that she has tried to make a representative list of the things that have most stimulated interest either to approval or protest, and that the reviews are not by any means reviews of the best films of the period. The original reviews are there, but she has occasionally added, as notes, thoughts presumably recollected in tranquillity. To those who have read these reviews in their original setting they are already familiar, but their wit and insight continue to please and astonish; for those who have not, there is that rarity nowadays—something pleasant to anticipate. As her son writes, in his clear-sighted introduction, "Here collected, then, are some of the best things about films that have been written by one who knows a great deal more about a very curious art, science or enchantment, than most of us will ever know."

Problems of Mass Education, by Margaret Read. (Current Affairs, No. 33, July 26th, 1947.) (Bureau of Current Affairs).

In this pamphlet the head of the Colonial Department of the University of London Institute of Education examines ways and means of bringing education to the masses. In the teaching of adults she urges, among other things, the most extensive use of films and radio. Wherever mobile cinema vans have been in operation, the interest and imagination of remote villagers have been awakened and the immediate need in British Africa is for an increase in the number of mobile cinema vans.

Geography and Visual Education, by G. J. Cons. (Royal Geographical Society, 1947. 1s.)

In the essay contained in this pamphlet Mr. Cons discusses the place of the local habitat, the map and the globe, still pictures, cinematography and the other visual aids in the teaching and learning of geography.

Formes et Couleurs, No. 6, 1946, Cinema. (Paris, 150 frs.)

This particular number of an excellently produced periodical is devoted almost

entirely to the subject of cinema. It includes an article on René Clair, by Gerard Bauer, a comparison of the American and European cinema, by Georges Charensol, and several contributions on subjects connected with the cinema but from an unusual angle. The magazine is illustrated by many beautiful reproductions of photographs and stills.

Filmgoers' Review: A Pictorial Survey of the Year's Films, 1946-7, by Forsyth Hardy. (Edinburgh, Albyn Press, 1947. 3s. 6d.)

This is the third in a series of annual publications. It contains a survey of feature films of many nationalities shown during the year. There is a section on the documentary, another on film personalities, but about two-thirds of the book is devoted to reviews of films of the year with their credits. The book is illustrated by a number of stills and some rather indifferent marginal drawings of various stars. This is a useful book up to a point, but a large number of books of a somewhat similar type are now appearing.

Wanted. SIGHT AND SOUND, numbers 50 and 51 (Summer and Autumn 1944). Please write to Peter Noble, 15, Amos Grove Court, London, N.11.

Si Peu Que Rien, by Denis Marion. (Paris, Gallimard, 1945.)

This story, which begins in Paris in 1937, tells of Georges Falgarde's two years' struggle to produce his film of De Musset's *Lorenzaccio*. The international crises of the period are mere shadows in the background and to him the only real crises are those of his film world. Only in September, 1939, does he realise that his film is doomed and that, having lost the battle in the studio, he must take up arms for France.

Cinema: Cours et Conférences de L'Institut des Hautes Etudes Cinématographiques. (Paris, Laboureur.)

The first two cahiers of Cinema have now appeared. They are being published so that the instruction provided by I.I.H.E.C. should not be limited to those who take the courses in order to become film directors, sound engineers or to take up some career in the cinema world. In published form the material will be made available to the large public of educated cinema enthusiasts. These cahiers manifest the high standard to be expected of I.I.H.E.C., and among those who have taken part in the work are such well-known authorities as Pierre Blanchard, Marcel L'Herbier, Georges Sadoul and Henri Langlois.

CORRESPONDENCE

Religious Films and "Instruments of the Orchestra"

DEAR SIR,

In dissenting so passionately from the use of the word "Protestant", my friend Brian Hession protests too much, methinks! This is not the place to embark upon a dissertation concerning the dogmatic differences between us, but I think it necessary to utter a protest in my turn at the implication his words convey that Biblical subjects like *Samson and Delilah* and *King David* illustrate a "swing towards Protestantism". Such a proprietorial attitude towards the Scriptures is surely a little naïve for these days!

Another point that comes ill from a man of his experience is the uncritical acceptance of the bogey of "dictation" by the "Roman Catholic Legion of Decency". He quotes an imposing list of films in which "Roman Catholicism" is "just taken for granted". Many things could be said in answer to the misapprehensions and erroneous implications contained in this phrase. I will content myself with two observations.

(a) The role played by the Legion of Decency is a negative one and consists in pointing out certain situations and ethical assumptions in films which are contrary to the belief and behaviour accepted as fundamentally Christian by the members of the Church. If, in spite of being a minority, as Mr. Hession assures us they are, American Catholics are thus able to bring moral pressure to bear upon the Box Office, this is surely an argument in favour of unity of belief!

For my part, I am convinced that a far more truly Catholic contribution to good films would be the positively constructive

criticism customary in the Catholic Press of this country, particularly the *Catholic Film News*. I might also mention in this connection the excellent work being done by the Church of England journal, *Contemporary Cinema*.

(b) The fact that "so many films have appeared with Roman Catholicism (*sic*) as the one and only religion" is due, perhaps, to the inherently sacramental nature of that religion. For example, take the choice with which a producer is faced when he wishes to bring a clergyman on to the screen in a death scene or at a sick bed. Either the histrionically cold and comfortless 'attendance' of the Protestant minister, or the dramatically colourful Catholic priest with the comforting Sacramental Presence which he is able to bring. Here, apart from other considerations of a theological nature, is the reason for the intrusion of Catholic ceremonial into so many films of late: and it has nothing to do with "the colossal growth of the power and influence of Roman Catholics".

Many of these scenes are distasteful, both from the point of view of dramatic fitness as well as propriety and dignity. Mr. Hession will be doing a good turn for better films if he will join us in protest when such scenes are artistically inadmissible. But let no unworthy note of comparison enter into his complaints. Remember the thousand and one films before Hollywood "discovered" the Catholic Church, in which none but the Sons of the Reform were depicted... and never a peep out of one of us!

Yours faithfully,

JOHN A. V. BURKE.

The Editor, *Sight and Sound*

DEAR SIR,—I feel that I must take up the cudgels on behalf of the Curzon and reply to Mr. Ken Cameron's letter in last month's issue, since I was, at the time of the showing of this film, General Manager of the Curzon Cinema.

We received a letter from Sir Malcolm Sargent saying that several of his friends had complained about the reproduction at the Curzon and we replied by sending two tickets and asking Sir Malcolm if he would do us the honour of coming to see and hear for himself. He was unable to come as he was going to Vienna, but he sent his son who expressed himself fully satisfied that justice was being done to the film.

I would like to point out to Mr. Cameron that the equipment at the Curzon is considerably pre-war and is beginning to show signs of wear although it is in spotless and shining condition and reflects great credit on the chief projectionist, against whom there have, to my knowledge, never been any complaints; in fact the standard of showing is fully compatible with the standing of the Curzon as a luxury cinema.

Both before and after the complaint was received I took special care to see this film and to cue if necessary—I have spent 18 years seeing films and I am a fairly average musician, so I think it can be said that I know a little.

Although I am no longer connected with the Curzon I have very pleasant memories of a happy association with people who are full of enthusiasm and anxious to do the right thing in the specialised field and I feel that both Mr. Cameron and Mr. Keller have been somewhat unjust in their criticisms.

FRANCIS HOWARD



Caesar and Cleopatra

Eagle-Lion

THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

What does Membership offer?

Full membership costs you £2 2s. a year. For it you will get SIGHT AND SOUND, the MONTHLY FILM BULLETIN and all our other publications free of charge

Reduced rates for hire of films from the National Film Library

Unlimited information and the use of our lending library of books

But, above all, your subscription will reinforce the Institute's policy of encouraging the development of the film as an art form and as an educational medium